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ELIZA BUTLER THOMPSON

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MEMORIAL

OF

ELIZA BUTLER THOMPSON.

BY HER DAUGHTER.

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"You can, if you will, be among the best of women, such as make others glad that they were born."

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This sketch was written with the intention of printing it, like the memorial of my two brothers, for family friends.

Others, outside the circle of relatives, who knew and loved my mother, and shared in the missionary work of her later years, have expressed a wish to read the story of her life, and for them it is published.

E. T. S.

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CHAPTER I.

FAMILY INFLUENCES.

LIBRARY

I.

FAMILY INFLUENCES.

> "*That things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs.*"
>
> MIDDLEMARCH.

A FAMILY connection, curious in such matters, has traced Mrs. Thompson's ancestry to a certain nonconformist English clergyman, Stephen Butler, who lived late in the sixteenth century.

Of the village where his rectory stood we know nothing, and have only scattered hints of the forces that blended in his mould. It is true the same antiquarian asserts that Stephen and all the Butlers descended from a certain Count Brion of Normandy; the name gradually changed to Boteler; and there is record in Froissart's Chronicles of the honorable deeds of Sir John Boteler in 1342. He bore the same name with his ancestor, one of William's knights, who came to England three centuries before. The only definite tradition that remains is of the marked

religiousness of the family. The mottoes on their shields are such as these, —

"Quæ Recta Sequor."
"Mea Gloria Crux."
"Timor Domini Fons Vitæ."
"Sublimiora Petamus."

So when it came to Stephen Butler to decide between adherence to his convictions and worldly success, he was true to the leading qualities of his race.

He was one of the two hundred clergymen, in the days of Parker and Laud, who were driven from their livings for their refusal to subscribe to the Three Articles. It is said that in the sermons preached to their parishes on the last Sunday before they were ejected, not one of these clergymen alluded to his personal troubles, but each comforted his people, exhorting them to Christian faith and patience. "They knew that they were pilgrims, and looked not much on these things, but lifted up their eyes to Heaven, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits."

It was on the fly-leaf of his copy of Calamy's book, giving an account of these men, that President Stiles wrote, "Egregiis hisce sit anima mea cum Puritanis."

Succeeding persecution evidently did not dim the "Sublimiora" that Stephen Butler "sought," for in 1632 we find the name of his descendant, Deacon

Richard Butler, on the records of the Puritan colony of Cambridge, Mass.

Richard Butler was one of the company who went through the wilderness in 1636, and formed the settlement at Hartford, on the Connecticut River; and more than one of the family lie in the old burial-ground behind the Centre Church.

A hundred and fifty years later, Daniel Butler went up the river from Hartford to Northampton, and established himself there as a merchant. In 1801 his wife, Anna Welsh, died, leaving three children, — Charles Parker, Anna, and Abigail Welsh.

October 26, 1802, he married Elizabeth Simpkins of Boston. Their fourth child in a family of seven was Elizabeth, born October 4, 1809.

Elizabeth Simpkins was the daughter of John Simpkins and Mehetible Kneeland. John Simpkins was long a deacon in the Old North Church, and was the last gentleman in Boston who clung to the fashion of short-clothes and knee-buckles. The knee and shoe buckles are still preserved, with a bit of pink silk from his wife's wedding-dress, remnants of her necklace, and her little embroidered wedding-slippers, with the high narrow heels.

At the time of her marriage to John Simpkins, Mehetible Kneeland was a widow, — Mrs. Torrey. Kneelands had been known in Boston from colonial

times. She was descended from John Kneeland, who is supposed to have been of Scotch origin, from the fact that he was one of the founders of the Scots' Charitable Society, established in Boston in 1657. He was a man of wealth and mark. Beginning as a stone-mason, he built the Old South Church and the old Hancock House. He was one of the original members of the Old South. As his fortune in real estate increased, Kneeland Street was named for him. The street extended from Washington (then Orange) Street to the water, which then, in 1777, extended up to Harrison Avenue (then Fleet Street), and at the foot was Kneeland's Wharf.

His son Samuel printed the first Bible in Boston in 1749. His second son, William, the father of Mehetible, was a physician, President of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and a person of note in his time.

The daughter was trained in a straiter than the straitest sect, in what was called Hopkinsianism, an offshoot of New England Calvinism in the days when the intellectual acuteness of that intellectual community was concentrated on theological science, and everlasting salvation was held almost to hinge on the framing of a sentence.

Dr. Hopkins taught that the love of self should be so subjected that one ought to be willing to be lost,

— were that for God's glory and the general good, — and many earnest souls, through untold spiritual anguish, strained after that superhuman height of holiness. Mehetible Simpkins was one of these, and was famed among the clergy of her day no less for her piety than for her theological learning.

"Many were the hours," says one of her descendants, "she spent with those stanch old divines, Eckley, Emmons and Dr. Samuel Hopkins, talking over the slow and gradual spread of Unitarianism. When the church in which her husband was deacon went over to that communion, he did not see difference enough to induce him to change; but she went alone and joined the Old South, the church of her ancestors. More and more the ministers used to come to seek her counsel. She was regarded as a superior woman, a mother in Israel, a helper in every good work, feeling that every one ought to know and do the right thing."

Their house was the home of the clergy of the region, in their visits to Boston. They felt it a sort of sin and disgrace to allow a minister to go to a public house. The children found a certain relief from the oppressive awe that surrounded these godly men, in occasional incidents, as when the Rev. Mr. Buckminster was entertained at one time. He retired, full of the theological discussions that had

been going on. In the night, disturbed by the unusual noises of the city street, he sprang up and attacked the looking-glass, imagining himself fighting with enemies. The crash of the broken glass wakened him and the family simultaneously, with some consternation.

Her household management did justice to the lofty conceptions of unselfishness which marked her theories. She was a widow with two children, Samuel and John Torrey, and with step-children when she married John Simpkins, a widower with children, and two or three children were born to them. In such a kingdom, with such provinces, she so ruled as to be remembered by every child with love and gratitude. The nobleness of duty overrode the tyranny of feeling. With her own personal property she set up one step-son in business. Another son, John, was apprenticed, according to the custom of the times, to a merchant who was to furnish board and clothing while the process of training was going on. Finding a sharp contrast between the old home and the new, John came to her one day desperate and determined. "He could not and would not stay! He could not bear it, no one could!" She was quiet till all was said, then calmly began, "John, do you have enough to eat?" "Why yes." "Do you have clothes enough to keep you warm?" "Yes, of course."

"Have you a bed to lie on at night?" "Yes." "Then go back and fulfil your part. You have nothing to complain of."

Fortunately there was enough of the same sturdy fibre in the boy to respond to the somewhat heroic treatment; he went back, and lived to tell the story in days of wealth and success. A gray-haired grandchild ruefully recalls an instance of similar management. He was visiting her when a little boy, and had been promised as a great treat that he should go with her to the Old South on Sunday afternoon. He went out to play a little in the garden beforehand, and when he came in found, to his bitter disappointment, that she had gone. She explained, on returning, that if he did not care enough about going to attend to the bell and come in when it rang, she did not think it worth while to call him. She was a very typical New England dame of the days of strong nerves, few words, and excellent sense. She was not quite so tender as true; but the world perhaps was not so universal a hospital then as now, and the exhortation as to the lame and those that are out of the way, "letting them rather be healed" than amputated, might not have been so essential.

In the month of May, 1802, a party of clergymen and others were dining at the house. The conversation turned on the wants of the world and the dark-

ness of the heathen. Just as one good man set down his empty wine-glass with a sigh over the sad state of things, Mrs. Simpkins said, with sudden courage, "Gentlemen, I have often thought if every one of you would, for every glass of wine you drink, give one cent toward sending Bibles to the destitute, a great work might be done." She spoke with a smile, but the words were born of long-smothered pondering and prayer.

"Well, well, here is my penny," said her husband, laying it on the table, and the others followed in a gallant little way, to humor a woman's playful word.

The subject turned and the dinner went on. As they rose from the table, each put the cent back into his pocket, as the jest was over. Just as John Simpkins took up his, the wife quietly laid her hand over it, saying, "No, my dear, you have given this to the Lord. Do not take it." He laughed, wondering at her whim, not knowing or caring what was beneath the words.

But when the moment for action, long desired, had come, she went to her room and drew up a constitution for a Cent Society, which stirs us yet by its suppressed fervor and direct appeal.

The original paper remains, and reads as follows: —

"*To the Friends of Religion.*

"A single cent, where millions are needed to carry into effect the benevolent designs of our Fathers and Brethren, who are engaged in sending the Gospel to lands unenlightened with its genial rays, may appear at first view small and inconsiderable; but should the Friends of Zion adopt the plan of only *one cent a week* and recommend the same practice to their friends and connections, it is supposed a respectable sum, without inconvenience to individuals, may be collected to be applied to the purchase of Primers, Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns, Catechisms, Divine Songs for Children, and Bibles. Mrs. John Simpkins requests those who are disposed to encourage this work that they would send in their names with their money (quarterly, or as shall be most agreeable to them), and she will engage to deposit the same with the treasurer of the Massachusetts Missionary Society, for the important purpose of aiding that very laudable institution.

"Boston, 26 May, 1802."

Names of subscribers and places of abode follow, — twenty-three names, and all of Boston, — and the first woman's missionary society in New England, probably the first in this country, was formed.

With this constitution there is a receipt, dated May 30, 1811, acknowledging "eight hundred dollars and one cent from Mrs. Mehetible Simpkins," and signed by "D. Hopkins and Samuel Spring, Committee."

There is, besides, a little book, belonging evidently a year or two later, with a longer additional address, stating that since the organization of the society it had received about eighteen hundred dollars. It is headed: "Despise not the day of small things," and closes as follows: "By these inconsiderable means many Bibles and other pious books have been put into the hands of the poor and destitute, and it is hoped we may still be encouraged by the prospect of great good in future, which by these small appropriations may arise, for those who sit in darkness to be brought into God's marvellous light. *Christ noticed the widow's mite.*"

The little grandchild, Elizabeth Butler, born in Northampton in 1809, inherited in a marked degree many of Mrs. Simpkins's characteristic traits. She had the same reality of nature, moral earnestness and persistency of purpose, with a certain soundness of judgment and strong conscientiousness.

Nothing is left of the old home on Pleasant Street now, but the great elms and the horse-chestnuts which Mrs. Butler planted the first season after she

came a bride from Boston to Northampton. The deep garden that stretched back from the house, where there were such races with Hector the dog, and flowers that blossomed from the time of snowdrops till frost, is covered with railway tracks and buildings. The house itself was torn down last year, so that now there is just the vacant green space under the shadow of the trees. Riding by in a lovely May afternoon, it seemed as if the house with all its memories had been buried under that shade "in sure and certain hope."

"How you children would have loved your grandfather!" was one of mother's common exclamations, especially when some merry mood was on us. He is remembered as tall and very stout, yet with the lightest step in the house, with twinkling blue eyes, the sunniest, kindliest temper, altogether the dearest, merriest old gentleman who was ever hugged and kissed and scrambled over by half a dozen children at once, the delight of his own little girls and boys and of all the small people of the neighborhood.

The hearty good-humor and love of diffusing joy and physical comfort, the social, genial traits in the household, were inherited from him. The Simpkins home with all its excellences had been a little austere, and Mrs. Butler with her numerous good qualities had brought with her a slight tendency to

gloom. The lack of entire cheerfulness and contentment which is remembered was partly due, besides, to habitual ill-health. Always delicate and liable to frequent illnesses, with the most exacting ideal of housekeeping and needlework, it is not strange that with the care of three children at first, and subsequently of her own seven who grew up around her, her spirits should not have been always buoyant. There was, besides, a deeper reason. While she was still quite young, her sister Sallie, one to whom she was very tenderly attached, married Captain Burroughs. Sallie was always frail, and soon faded away. Some time after her death the affection which had existed between Elizabeth and Captain Burroughs deepened into love. He had sailed away and come safely home from many voyages. There was now to be one more to make his fortune sure, and on his return from this voyage they were to be married. His parting gift to her, just before sailing, is still preserved; a pair of bracelet-clasps on which is painted a maiden leaning in a pensive attitude against the trysting-tree, holding in her hand a wreath. Over her head is the motto "Present or absent, ever dear." With the paint was mixed a lock of the sister's hair dissolved in an acid.

When he had been some time gone, Elizabeth one night dreamed that she was standing on the shore,

looking out to sea, and saw his vessel. While she was still watching it, a cloud suddenly fell and shut it out from her sight. She woke with the saddest impression that she should see him no more. After a time a returning merchantman brought the news that confirmed the forewarning. They had spoken Captain Burroughs's ship just at nightfall. His vessel was disabled from a storm, and they urged him to leave it and come on board. He refused steadily, saying he could not leave the cargo intrusted to him, while one chance remained of saving it. In the morning his ship had disappeared. That sorrow, though it was out of sight, tinged all her after-life.

It was the common way of complimenting the mother, to jest with the daughters and tell them they would never be as handsome as she. Her figure was tall and graceful, and her features regular, with large dark eyes and an expression of refinement. Her cheeks, when she lay in her coffin, still retained a trace of the clear red which never left them. Her children were instructed in household arts with conscientious exactness. The sampler went with the catechism, for whatever the chief end of man was found to be, the chief end of woman was to "take two and leave two" as to threads in stitching, to cut out garments with economy, and "beat separately" the whites and yolks of innumerable eggs

for the cakes which were the culmination of good housewifery. The two housemaids were kept sufficiently employed without being intrusted with the finer mysteries of cooking; and Elizabeth was hardly more than a little girl when she began to be chief assistant, the one to wait upon her mother when the great concoctions were proceeding, the faithful little nurse in sickness. That she was willing to be relied on was reason enough, as things were, why she should take responsibility very early. Circumstances all combined to develop her strong moral traits, and duty, not enjoyment, was becoming the law of her life.

Of the three half brothers and sisters, Abby was the one to whom she was most attached. How often did she say, looking back to her childhood, "Your Aunt Abby was not so pretty as her sister Anne, but she had a strong character. If she had lived, I should have been very different. She was the only one who really understood me. She took great pains with me, talked with me about my faults, showed me how to correct them, and used often to say, 'Eliza, you have the material for a fine character if you can only conquer yourself.' I loved her dearly, and when she talked with me about my irritability and fondness for having my own way, and explained how to guard against temptation, I felt drawn to her all the more. I knew she loved me,

and I clung to her with all my heart." Abby's fatal illness was lingering and long, but the little sister Elizabeth was untiring in her devotion to her. Many years after some one asked her, "How did you acquire your wonderful skill in nursing?" "I began early," she said, and described her experience in Abby's illness. "I loved her, and wanted so to stay with her and to be of use to her, I tried my very best to learn to wait upon her in the right way, and it ended in my being permitted to remain in the sick-room almost constantly."

When Abby died, it was a deep, permanent grief. The child heart ached long from loss and the peculiar loneliness that falls when one goes who holds a key to our inner life. No after-friendship effaced Abby's memory. Fifty years later she could not speak of her without a wistful, far-off look in her eyes and a shadow on her lips. A lock of auburn hair was found carefully preserved in her desk, marked "Sister Abby," side by side with letters from the half-brother Charles, — old yellow letters, folded square and directed to "Daniel Butler, Merchant." Charles had a passion for the sea in his boyhood, which his father opposed at first. Finally, by the advice of friends, he sent him on a voyage before the mast, with a captain whom he knew. It was an effectual cure. He left home when the little

girls were very young, and while on a business trip, died suddenly of yellow-fever, at Bayou St. Louis, September 15, 1820. There was always a romance in mother's mind connected with the bits of pretty glass and china Charles had brought home from that one voyage. They seemed inwrought with her first dim, childish impressions of foreign lands, with the strangeness of his sudden death and burial in the far-away South.

Among other notable ways brought by Eliza's mother from the good town of Boston, was that of having all little girls taught how to make an entire shirt before they were seven years old. This the oldest daughter duly proceeded to accomplish, setting so many careful, faithful stitches in the linen, and feeling well rewarded for all her toil by her father's kiss, when it was presented to him. Just as conscientiously she learned all varieties of embroidery on linen and canvas and lace, all sorts of hemstitching and cross-stitching, cushions and needle-books, which were a marvel of exquisite finish and exact construction; meanwhile she was being initiated more and more deeply into the art of elaborate cookery, the adaptations of sauces and gravies, the exact proportions of brandy and wine in plum-puddings and mince-pies, the construction of perfect salads and soups, and feathery tarts and jellies of which it

does not behoove a dyspeptic generation even to dream.

Those were the days when the decrees of God were held responsible for gastric fevers, and the demijohn of "elixir pro." was the end of all strife.

The physician's word was as positive law in the physical realm as the minister's in the spiritual, and what physician in New England in our grandmother's days ever suggested prevention rather than cure? So the generous table was spread day after day, with every thing that skill could devise; and the fame of Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners spread far and wide among the cousins and connections, to whom the hearty hospitality of the house made even the memory of the Pleasant Street home bright. The best varieties of apples and pears, cider from the farmer on the Pelham hills, who knew how to make it exactly right, wine on the sideboard for callers, — all had a certain importance as essential to physical comfort. A Grahamite in cooking would have been looked upon in their circle with as ill-concealed disgust as a tory in politics or a liberal in theology.

Stanch whigs on both sides, strict Calvinists on the mother's, girls and boys talked politics in the week-time with as much zeal as if the daughters expected to vote with the sons; and on Sundays settled down to the catechism and Parson Williams's long

sermons, filling the square pew and getting a certain discipline of endurance, till he came to the point they were watching for, — "Let us now pass to the application."

Not even when the damask roses were in bloom, and orioles singing in the elm-trees, was a walk down the garden allowed on that one long day of the week; yet in such a merry, affectionate household there were a thousand reliefs, and whatever else was missed they were sure to feel, at least on Sunday, that religion, as she understood it, was in the mother's mind the one essential thing.

Eliza grew up very pretty. Her complexion was a marvellous pink and white, her figure slender and round, clear gray eyes, and curling dark hair. "We used to think," says a sister, "that Eliza would be a perfect beauty, except for her mouth, for the teeth were a little irregular."

She was so absolutely free from vanity or self-consciousness as often to neglect the common girlish arts for making one's self attractive. She hardly knew or cared what ribbon became her, or how she looked on any occasion. But suddenly one day her mother awoke to the fact of her beauty, and the effect on her white forehead of a particularly lovely curl that formed itself naturally on the right side. Eliza was solemnly summoned, and the curl cut off, "for

fear it would make her vain!" — a touch of asceticism whose absurdity nothing could hinder her strong common-sense from condemning then and always. The lock never grew long, but lay always in little crinkles and waves very unconquerable, very troublesome in the wind, and very dear to those who loved her face. In her matronhood, she said, with that simplicity which never forsook her, "It had never entered my mind that I was pretty, but the short lock has given me a great deal of trouble. I never saw the necessity for cutting it off."

Nearly every spring, though she was not thought delicate, she drooped and sank into slow fever, and remembered always her feeling of lassitude and the weariness of gradual creeping back to her old condition. But even then that spirit of "making the best of things" was strong within her, and she yielded to inaction only so long as she must. As soon as possible she was again at her work-basket, always so carefully supplied with thread and needles and all other appliances, the resort of younger sisters in all cases of need, to the great trial of her patience; or she was running in the garden with Hector, the big dog whom they all loved so much, or looking after the flowers which her mother took vast pains to have blooming all through the season. When Lafayette made his tour of New England, in 1825, she was one of the

company of young girls who went out, dressed in white, to scatter flowers in his way. Her love of flowers and all external nature was evident very early. Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom were personal friends. That beautiful valley is dear to every one who grows up in it, and nowhere lovelier than at that river-bend which holds Northampton. Song and story have since celebrated the charm of the old town and the exquisite landscape, the view of the meadows from the mountain, and the view of the mountains from Round Hill, the great old tree where Jonathan Edwards sat to write his sermons, the glory of the elms in summer and the maples in autumn, and the attraction of its refined society. It all grew into the very soul of the children who played under those trees, hunted wild-flowers in the meadows, and picked arbutus every spring on the hills, had May parties and crowned May queens, in the days when the war of 1812 was the last event, before letters were put in envelopes, when Monroe was president, steamships and railways and the telegraph unknown, and the semi-weekly Boston stage-coach the closest connection Northampton had with the great outside world.

CHAPTER II.

YOUTH AND MARRIAGE.

II.

YOUTH AND MARRIAGE.

"*So from the heights of Will*
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends."

HOLMES.

"*These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*"

ST. JOHN.

FORTUNATELY for my mother and those who were to come after, the graded-school system did not exist in her childhood.

There was no iron six-hours régime, with examinations for promotion and the fever of hurry and competition, to burn out the life of young girls, while individuality is buried under routine. Unfortunately nothing better was in its place.

The daughter who had been trained in needle-work and domestic management, taught the spelling and grammar of her native tongue, geography, history, and arithmetic, might or might not push on toward science and the knowledge of other languages. If she had

a strong intellectual bent and was favorably situated, she could sometimes snatch what hung a little too high for her. Ordinarily, with the prevailing opinion that the ideal woman might be ignorant, though she must be good, and owed a limitless duty to every thing and every person about her, excepting to her own intellect, girls accepted the situation, smothered their wonder why there were not colleges for them as well as for boys, and stitched into the wristbands and collars of the brothers who were starting for Yale or Harvard, their silent puzzle and longing. Smith College is one of the first objects of interest to the stranger who visits Northampton now; but it was fifty years too late for the young girl who in 1825 had finished reciting history, drawing maps, copying extracts from Percival, and running through the paradigms of the first Latin Lessons.

There was no one to observe in her well-formed head, her uncommon perseverance in noticing and investigating natural processes and classifying natural objects, in her indifference to trifles and enthusiasm for worthy ends, her soundness of judgment and strength of purpose, indications of a mind that would repay special training.

It was left for those who saw her collecting mosses and shells when she was past sixty, valuing them not wholly for their beauty, but delighting in the ugliest

brown bit if it were a specimen of a class, to detect in her the genuine scientific spirit, and to say as many did, "What might she not have done in a special department if she had been educated for it!"

"I was generally considered a good scholar," she wrote once to a friend, "and was so, according to the system of instruction at that time. I learned easily and loved to learn, but was not required to understand. There was no one to superintend my studies, and though I wanted to go beyond the common English branches, my father thought it unnecessary. When I left school I was supposed to have a very good education." Years afterward, when she was twenty-two, she began a course of study with Miss Margaret Dwight, taking Euclid, mental philosophy, and some other branches, writing careful abstracts. It was valuable to her, though interrupted before it was completed. She painted a little and well, flowers and fruit, — sweet-brier, white lilies, and a little red apple on a blue plate, still remaining as specimens of her skill.

In her correspondence with her cousin, Anne Payson, there is allusion to the books in which they both were interested, Anne asking her if she has read "Saratoga," and whether the hero does not remind her of Sir Charles Grandison.

Dancing and dancing-parties the small Eliza en-

joyed heartily. In a letter written by her brother John, just after returning to Yale from vacation, he asks her "how the agricultural ball passed off," and says "he is glad she did not go," as he does not quite approve of so much gayety for so very young girls, "grandchildren dancing with their venerable ancestors."

She was then thirteen. It could not have been long after, that she made the visit to her Aunt Welles in Hartford. Mrs. Welles was a sister of her father, living on what was so long known as the Welles place, on Washington Street, and was quite blind. That visit she always recalled with great interest. My mother liked to describe the marvellous patience of her aunt, her moving about the house without help, her way of saying, if a thing was lost, "I will find it;" her going to closets and bureau drawers and producing articles which others who could see had vainly searched for; and the instinct which guided her, on entering a room, directly to the guest she wished to welcome, without hesitation or awkwardness.

The little niece sprang one evening to get a lamp for her aunt who was going upstairs, and never forgot the tone in which she answered, "My dear, the darkness and the light are alike to me."

Mrs. Welles regretted, in her hearing one day, that

no one in the different families had her name. So easy a way of giving happiness did not escape the notice of the child. She insisted that she would take it, and did so, ever after signing her name with the W. The Elizabeth of her christening had some time before passed into Eliza, to avoid confusion with a cousin, Elizabeth Butler, living on the same street.

After John had gone to college, the next event that stirred the current of the family life was Eliza's winter in Boston. She was invited by Mrs. Rollins, a cousin, and set out with much of the same excited anticipation with which a young Boston girl would start for Paris now. The blue silk pelisse in which she was arrayed is in existence still, with its belt too short for any but the very slenderest waists that have tried it, in tableaux, since, and wide balloon-like sleeves, — "mutton-legs," as they were called.

The faithful little thimble was packed away, there was the last hug of Hector the dog, tears and kisses all round the little group of which she was just then the centre; and the gray-eyed girl, with pinker roses in her cheeks than ever, set out in the stage-coach for the long journey, and her first glimpse of the great world. That winter was an episode ever kept quite by itself in her memory. To trace just the effect of all the new experience, and to picture the artless, strong, direct nature in its first contact with

society as she was introduced to it on Beacon Street, would need a master's skill. One can see it better than say it. The theatre disappointed her; she was taken to witness different plays, but she said it all seemed unreal. Reason overbalanced imagination in her mind, and the "make believe" did not seem to her worth while. Parties and balls had a zest. The white satin bodice and scant India muslin, with which she wore pomegranates and cherry ribbons, were found years after, in the days when she had come to look back on all that as a sin, and made the occasion of half-reluctant descriptions of other lovely costumes in which she danced away the night. It was her delight, though she was strangely unconscious of the charming picture she must have made, with her fair face and waving hair, the exquisitely turned arms, tapering to the slender wrist, and the perfectly moulded hand, covered, but not concealed, by the long kid gloves it was the fashion to wear, nearly to the elbow. The only point of personal beauty in which she ever confessed any satisfaction, was a certain turn of foot and ankle, tapering and with very high instep, which pleased her because it was like her father's.

Her letters describing what she saw, and her new sensations that season, her seventeenth winter, are not to be found; but those from home were care-

fully folded away in her desk. They give glimpses of a cheery, affectionate family life: the sister tells of all the calls and visits; Daniel describes how early Nancy, the maid, woke him the 1st of January, by her "Happy New Year!" at his door; and John caresses and teases all in one breath. That she was dearly loved and sorely missed is very plain. There are sly allusions to her as "a young lady of fashion," and hints of increasing sensitiveness to matters of dress, in Maria's remark, "If you do not like the shape of the cap mother made you, send it back;" and was it then or earlier she experienced misery in having square-toed shoes bought for her when round toes were in fashion?

One cannot repress a heartache, though her own pangs were so long ago over, at the sudden breaking-off of that joyful, free winter. All was still at high tide, the dance with the officers at the Navy Yard ball, concerts here and calls there, and long-anticipated visits to cousins in Charlestown and elsewhere still in prospect, when Sister Anne's letters begin to grow mysterious. Hitherto they had been full of elaborate advice on behavior and obligations, — "Do not let the reputation of Northampton ladies, for good manners, suffer at your hands." "Appear properly on all occasions, and keep us advised of your movements." But now, after various inexplicable hints

from Anne and mystifications on the part of the big brothers, it comes out that Anne has promised to marry Mr. B., a gentleman from the South, with five children, and directly it is suggested that Eliza has been gone from home some time. She clings to the carrying out of her bright plans; but the suggestions become more definite, and at last comes the letter which says, "We must have your assistance in preparations for the approaching wedding. You know you are a dabster at work, and we want your help." The postscript signed "Your aff. father, D. Butler," announced "that her passage is engaged in Thursday's stage, and they shall expect her." So the trunk was packed, rather soberly, we must think. No more flutter under the little satin bodice; but before the journey is over, loving thoughts of home have partly covered the disappointment, and the thimble comes out again, the gay pictures begin to retire to the background, after all the stories have been told and the pretty things exhibited, and while she thinks she is only helping, as a sister should, to make Anne's wedding-dresses, the currents have changed, bearing her quite away from one shore and towards the opposite. While they sat sewing, the fates were weaving one more strong thread into the character of the young girl, and drawing her closer to the company of the elect, who are "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

There is a strange sensation in taking up the package of faded letters, tied with white ribbon, the first of which has the news of Anne's engagement. In the next there is the stir of preparation, the description of the house that is to be built, — and there it stands still, white and stately on Round Hill; then after the wedding, the journals of the trip undertaken within the year for Anne's failing health; the account of her cough, which is "a little better," — those coughs that are always "a little better." More serious letters follow, in which Anne pours out the soul experiences of the past years, which in health she had found it impossible to utter to them. She tells them through what doubts and conflicts she came to faith and joyful trust in Christ; then no more from Anne, but the rest in her husband's handwriting, saying, "She fails but is wonderfully supported, that her peace is something marvellous, that death has no terror, and heaven a home of rapture to her thought," and soon that all is over and "our precious Anne is no more." In the next enclosure are the green leaves from her grave in Petersburg, Va.

During that year Eliza had much care of the little children who were left behind in the home on the Hill, while the invalid mother was travelling. She was at the house every day, and dearly loved Lucy, the youngest little girl, with her sweet ways and

pretty "Din Aunt Izy," when she was tossed up and caught. The child fell suddenly ill, and died before the father's return. It was a sharp pain to the tender heart that loved so deeply and so long when it loved at all. To the last of her life her eyes grew dim whenever she spoke of the child.

"I never could understand," says a cousin, who was very intimate in their home, "why Eliza should say, as she sometimes did to me, that her temperament was not cheerful, that she inclined to sombre thoughts, and had a good deal of sadness that she could not shake off. It must be simply another example of those who do not understand themselves, for a merrier, sunnier creature never lived. She was all heartiness, the embodiment of hope and kindness."

But she knew the deep unrest that no one understood and nothing quieted; and the good angels knew, as they watched her bending over her embroidery or waking weary after the night's ball, that the forces that moulded her were culminating. A better Friend than she knew was nearer than she thought.

October 20, 1826, her sister Anne writes to her, "Oh, my dear sister, the steppings of Jehovah have indeed been stately among us, and his name be for ever praised that he has graciously condescended to

visit us with the blessings of his grace. The language of your letter did appear strange, as coming from the gay and thoughtless sister that I parted from a few weeks before. I had sensibly realized the dreadful brink on which you stood, and had prayed earnestly that you might be arrested in your course ere it was too late. Let me tell you, my dear Eliza; I was grieved to see you so obstinately determined not to interest yourself in the solemn concerns of eternity. Your conduct was very frivolous, and I looked upon you as standing upon dangerous ground. I am sure mother was in bitterness for you. She told me how Martha B., Elizabeth S., your favorite companion, and yourself were opposing the work of the Lord. You will now regret that you did not encourage, instead of using every effort to dissipate the seriousness of little N. and M. in the early part of the summer. Be careful now in every thing to set them a good example. Be careful to guard your temper, to watch over your thoughts, and pray that you may be kept from the allurements of the world. You are very young, and dangers will beset you on every side, but put your trust in your Maker and persevere. Realize that you are continually in his presence. Seek at all times light and protection from him, and he will be ready to hear you."

In September, 1828, Dr. Ichabod Spencer became

pastor of the church in Northampton, and had a peculiarly strong influence in forming my mother's religious opinions and stimulating her spiritual life. In her diary, under date of October 4, 1829, is this entry: "I have completed the circuit of my twentieth year. It becomes me at this time to review my life, to ascertain if I have lived like an heir of immortality. I do most earnestly desire to come out from the world and join myself to the church of Christ, to become a devoted Christian, and *never* to be a reproach or disgrace to the religion of Christ."

"*February* 21, 1830. — I have not till now had an opportunity of recording the fulfilment of the promise I made on my birthday. I then promised soon to profess my faith in Christ and give myself up entirely to his service. On the first Sabbath of this month I came forward and joined myself to the people of God. I trust I was enabled to give up every feeling and affection of my heart to be governed by his will. He answered my prayer, even beyond my expectation, in delivering me from the fear of man, and in strengthening me for the performance of this duty. He granted me the light of his countenance and the joys of his salvation. I came in simple reliance on my Saviour, and experienced no rapturous joy, but a calm, unclouded hope that I was accepted with God, and the fulfilment of

that promise, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.' O my Saviour, I have given myself up entirely to thy service. Grant unto me patience to wait all my appointed time till my change come, and while I remain on earth let me be doing something for thy glory. I would not live a useless life. Thou knowest my weakness, but thou canst be touched with the feeling of my infirmities; thou hast been tempted even as I am, and I delight to cast myself on Thee."

"*May* 2, 1830.—I cannot better spend the afternoon of this holy day than in reviewing my Christian experience. How difficult the task! Guide me, O thou Spirit of grace, that I err not and record nothing inconsistent with truth. From my earliest youth I was subject to serious impressions; when a child, I frequently resolved to be a Christian; my soul would tremble at the wrath of God, and melt into contrition under a sense of his mercy; then I would endeavor to pacify my conscience by a formula of duties, and when the heartless manner in which they were performed failed to satisfy, I would dismiss the heavenly messenger with, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee;' but these seasons seldom returned after the age of thirteen, though the remembrance of them would sometimes imbitter my gayest hours, and spread a

gloom over my spirits, even in the enjoyment of what my wicked heart most coveted, and when revelling amidst the luxuriance and beauty of nature, the monitory voice has come like a blight over my spirit, and my accusing conscience would whisper, 'Shall all nature utter the praises of its Creator, and shall man, the only creature of his hand capable of rendering him rational worship, — shall he withhold the tribute of his praise?' Thoughts like these would sometimes disturb my peace, but they were quickly forgotten, and my soul plunged into the pleasures of sin. In the spring of 1826, I returned home from Boston, with a heart more than ever devoted to the world and more fully determined not to yield to the claims of the gospel. Indeed, I was hardened in indifference and 'cared for none of these things.' But God had begun to pour out his Spirit upon the town, and my attention was again drawn to the subject; but as my conscience became alarmed, so also did my sin, and I determined that I would not become a Christian then. I was resolved to become a Christian before I died, but it should be in my own time and my own way, and my pride especially revolted at becoming pious in a *revival*. With these determinations, I went on. I was watched. I avoided the society of Christians, and tried to escape from my conscience. I remained in this state till the first of September,

when one day Mr. S. called and conversed with me a long time on the subject. I was quite angry at the time, for I had formed my resolution and did not wish to be disturbed. Of course what he said failed to impress me, but after having obtained my permission to pray with me, he rose to leave, when, taking my hand, he said solemnly, but affectionately, 'I have done for you all that I can do, and by your own consent you have been committed into the hands of God, and remember you are dealing with him.' This thought fell like a thunderbolt upon my soul. I had been flattering myself that I was not opposed to God, but only to the extravagance of Christians; but now I felt that I was in the hands of God, and I was alarmed. I felt that I was deciding for eternity. I deliberately counted the cost of being a Christian. All those obstacles which appeared so mountainous before, now vanished into air; but there was nothing I feared more than the ridicule of those associates with whom I had joined in pouring contempt upon others. This vanished before the light of the Judgment. I felt that there they could do me no good, they could not even save themselves. I determined not to hesitate any longer, but immediately gave myself up to God; then my fears were quieted, and my mind, which had recently been full of anguish, was now calm and peaceful.

"I was so ignorant of spiritual things it was a long time before I could believe that one so vile as I had been, could be a Christian. I could not think I was the enemy of God, but I was afraid to call myself his friend. I dared not apply his promises to myself, yet when the thought of death came over me, I would cling to the feet of my Saviour, resolved if I perished to perish there. A death-like apathy settled upon my soul, yet in all my darkness I never dared to murmur against God. I knew the difficulty was all in myself. Often have I risen from my secret devotions feeling that my prayers were so cold and heartless that they were little better than blasphemy. The tempter would suggest it was more sinful for me to pray than to neglect the duty, but conscience told me that I stood more in need of prayer then than ever, and, thanks be to God, I was never induced to relinquish it, or any other *form* of religion, so that I hope I have not brought any positive disgrace upon religion. Through it all I continually offered one sincere prayer to God that I might not be deceived.

"In the spring of 1828, God called me to mourn the loss of a very dear sister, and I trust this dispensation of his providence was not lost upon me. It taught me to examine my own heart, to scrutinize carefully my feelings and motives during her sickness. I could not feel willing that she should live or die just as God

saw best; no, I could not give her up; she must recover and return to us once more. I recognized his hand in her death, but I fear the little resignation I had, proceeded more from a conviction of the power of God than from any true love or submission to him. I trust the result of this dispensation was a deeper insight into the iniquity of my heart, and the determination to become more decidedly a Christian. Through the summer I was constantly striving to recommend myself to the favor of God by endeavoring to overcome in my own strength the depravity of my heart and to make myself more worthy of his love. The result of this course was a complete failure. I was wretchedly unhappy, I could find no happiness in myself and none in my God; and the world — I loathed it: its pleasures were never so insipid, its allurements were never so feeble; and, unhappy as I was, I preferred remaining in that state to returning to its bondage.

"In the autumn Mr. Spencer was settled as our pastor, and I owe it to his faithful, heart-searching preaching, under the blessing of God, that I was ever brought to hope that I was a Christian. One sermon in particular was much blessed to me; it was on faith. He first explained true faith and then painted its counterfeit. He said that one characteristic of false faith was relying on the ACT of faith for salva-

tion instead of the merits of Christ alone. This was precisely my situation. I had, as I thought, given myself up to God, and I felt I had a right to be saved. I had often wondered, and had sometimes felt inclined to murmur, that I could not be happy, but never, till I heard this sermon, did I incline to suspect that this might be my difficulty. When I did discover it, I trust I was enabled to renounce all dependence upon any thing but the blood of Jesus, and never, till then, did I know what it was *to rejoice* in hope.

"It was now my ardent desire and firm purpose to be a spiritual and devoted Christian. I did not wish to be known as a Christian *only* when I was at the communion-table, but I wished to make it manifest by my life and conversation that I had been with Jesus.

"I determined to give up every worldly pleasure, every sinful amusement, and as far as possible to absent myself from every fashionable party, and not to have it said of me, 'What does she more than others?' but I did not wish to have my religion consist in this. I wished to live a life of faith on the Son of God, to be daily holding communion with him and seeking by the influences of the Holy Spirit to grow in grace. I wished to be laboring in his service, and thus to be laying up for myself treasure in heaven, and to be constantly prepared and looking

forward to that day when I could go home and dwell for ever with my Redeemer.

"*May* 15. — Found two of my dear class in the Sabbath School rejoicing in hope. I was overwhelmed by the mercy of God, but now experienced a reverse of feeling. I found that I was more anxious to satisfy the church that I was engaged, than I was to be strong in faith and have my heart humble and prayerful before God; and then my old besetting sin, pride, would fain persuade me that I was very good and that I was very much engaged. Then I found that I was becoming cold and formal; but I could not rest in this state. I determined to arise and go to my Father, and the thought came sweetly to my heart, I could not be more than the chief of sinners, and that was the very person Jesus came to save.

"*February* 6. — Dr. Spencer alluded to the prospect of his separation from us. I wept bitter tears of sorrow at the thought of losing so good, so affectionate, and so faithful a shepherd. In the afternoon the claims of Home Missions were presented; I felt that I longed to do something in this work, and that I was willing to go where the Lord should send me, and do any thing, if I could be instrumental of good to the perishing. I have drawn very near to God in prayer, and he has enabled me to give up all that I

have and am to him. I felt that *he* was my portion, my guide, and I needed nothing more. I cheerfully gave up my beloved pastor to him as a precious gift that he had loaned me for a little, and now in his mysterious providence recalled."

There is carefully kept in her desk a little note which runs as follows, "The Miss Butlers are obliged to decline the very polite invitation of the managers of the cotillon party for to-morrow evening," February 2, 1830, and which was evidently preserved as marking a decided change in her course of action.

"Every thing was strict and straightforward with her," says her sister Maria. "There was a distinct line drawn between the church and the world. It must have been in 1832, while she was visiting in New York, and had been anxiously expecting a letter from home, when a letter was brought to her on Sunday morning, and, knowing that it would be full of chit-chat about Mr. B.'s wedding, she locked it in her trunk and would not open it until Monday morning." Her brother Daniel says: "She was faithful in her closet duties long before she united with the church. Prayer and the study of God's Word were her life, and made her what she was. She not only continued in prayer, but became mighty in prayer, and will be classed with those who have prevailed with God."

I quote from her diary under date of January, 1833:

"In the presence of God, with the solemn realities of eternity in view, I covenant to devote myself unreservedly to his service, to deny myself, to take up the cross and follow Christ. I will remember that I am not my own, and will be ready for any work to which God shall call me. I beseech thee, dear Saviour, if it be thy will, to let me carry the gospel to the destitute. Prepare me for it by the discipline of thy Spirit, that in humility and godly sincerity I may follow thee whithersoever thou goest, and live like a pilgrim and stranger on the earth."

"*June* 9, 1833. — For the last month my mind has been much agitated with the question whether I should remove my connection from the old church to the new Edwards Church. I have prayed earnestly for Divine direction, desirous of following only the path of duty independently of every other consideration, but whether I really possessed this feeling of submission, He alone who searches the heart can tell. I have decided to take the step. While my mind has been thus engaged I find my heart has sadly run to waste. At one time I was influenced by a spirit of self-complacency, at another by pride, worldly-mindedness, and fear of man, and, what was worse, I found myself cherishing a spirit of party. These are but a few of the wicked feelings I found rankling in my bosom. My prayers were not fervent and spir-

itual. I indulged in wandering thoughts and vain imaginations, and so my soul was paralyzed. But God has not left my soul in the power of the Lion. I think I can now say I have not an unkind feeling toward any member of this church. Met this morning an hour before church with the Sunday School teachers, to pray for our classes. If I ever feel I am nothing without the grace of God, it is when I stand before my class.

"*September* 29. — Seated at my favorite window enjoying the calm repose of this holy evening, I would record the dealings of God with my soul. In June I was much occupied in assisting to prepare for a fair, but I did it as a task. My heart was not as deeply interested as I thought it would be. But I could not remain long in this state without being sensible that I was very different from what a Christian ought to be. I found the fear of man had been a snare to me, I was too apt to be satisfied with the confidence and good opinion of others, and had not sought as my single aim the approbation of God. In July I was quite ill for a few days, and asked myself if I wished to die, to leave this world and go to heaven; to my shame, I found I was not willing or ready. I had been living for myself, and had hardly begun to do any thing for the cause of Christ. I prayed that I might recover and carry out the plans

I had formed. I was reminded of the importance of making the conversion of souls a prominent object in my prayers. I found that had not been my custom, but that my own salvation and that of my friends had been my principal object. I resolved henceforth to obey the injunction of the Saviour in his directions to his church, and offer as my first petition, 'Thy kingdom come.' I have been surprised at the result of this course, a deeper interest in the prosperity of Zion, more spirituality of feeling, a stronger hope of my own safety, and a more intimate communion with God. Yet this is but the natural result of obedience to God. He is faithful to his promises, and nothing but our unbelief makes us surprised when we experience their fulfilment. I little thought at this time for what my Heavenly Father was preparing me, for what he had been humbling me, then brightening my hope and strengthening my faith; but soon in his providence he taught me. My beloved father was laid on a bed of sickness, and in three short weeks (September 15, 1833, at the age of sixty-five) I followed him to the grave. This was a sudden blow, and one that came nearer to my heart than any other could have done. It seemed at times as if I should be overwhelmed, as if my heart could not endure this dreadful stroke; but my faithful, covenant God was with me. He put underneath me

his almighty arm, he hid me in the secret of his tabernacle, and by his grace he kept me trusting in him. All the circumstances of my dear father's illness were ordered in mercy, and we have reason to hope that he slept in Jesus. This is enough to call forth everlasting gratitude. I have long prayed to be weaned from the world, and I trust this was in answer to my prayer, and that henceforth I shall live to the glory of God. I trust that, over the remains of my departed parent, I laid hold of the precious promises to the fatherless. God's love never before seemed to me so precious. I wished to testify of its sufficiency to all around. I felt I could endure any thing that would thus bring me near to him."

In a letter dated September 18, 1833, to Rev. William Thompson, a friend with whom she was at that time corresponding, she says, "On Sunday evening my father's fever assumed a serious aspect that proved to be the crisis of the disease. From that hour he gradually sank until Friday morning, when the final struggle began, and just as the last rays of the setting sun illumined the western sky, his spirit winged its flight to immortality. I feel that my father came to Christ with a deep sense of sin, a renunciation of his own righteousness, and a desire to receive salvation as a free gift through a crucified Redeemer. His soul was overwhelmed with the love

of Jesus and the promises of God. This work was not all deferred to the hour of sickness; for weeks before, his mind was deeply impressed with the subject, and he told me he had formed a solemn resolution to live to the glory of God. He was actually engaged in arranging to transfer the business to my brother, that he might have leisure to prepare for another world.

"On Friday morning he was perfectly conscious, though not permitted to revive sufficiently to give us his dying blessing. I know we have it, for he evidently knew us all. His eye turned from one to another, and watched us as we stood around his bed. We feared his last agony would be severe, but God in mercy spared us this, and led him gently through the dark valley. But I will not attempt to describe these sad scenes. If you have ever passed through a similar affliction you know too well each circumstance: the alternations of hope and fear as day by day you stand by the dying pillow; and then, as hope is fast receding, to watch the flickering pulse, that was wont to beat *so warmly* with paternal love, and to feel the last quiver tremble to your touch; to see that mild, bright eye, that ever beamed in fondness on his child, fixed and glazed in death, — oh, there is an anguish in this that none can know but those whose hearts have been thus torn. I am sorry you did not know my father when you were here, as you

could not have known him without esteeming him, and you ought to know his worth rightly to appreciate our loss. I believe I possessed his entire confidence, and he regarded me, in common with my sisters, rather as a friend than a child."

The winter of 1832 she spent with her brother John, then a practising physician in Worcester, Mass. It is of him she says in an early letter, "I have not only confided in him as a brother, but have been warmly attached to him as a friend." The records in her diary of longing for his conversion, and his letters to her, extending from her childhood to her marriage, all carefully folded in the "red desk," are the reflex of an ideal sisterly love, all tenderness, merriment, moralizing, confidence, and unselfish devotion to his comfort and his higher interests. His baby son, Charles, she speaks of at this time as "a fine child, and so like my dear father."

It was some time during this visit that she first met the one who was to be "nearest and dearest." The family were at a little tea-party at the house of Rev. John C. Abbott, and a theological student from Andover, William Thompson, was of the company. His first and lasting impression of her face is as she stood on the opposite side of the room, leaning to look at an engraving, absorbed, calm, and unconscious of every thing but the picture.

She remembered him as one with whom she would like to talk again, but had begun to think that would never be, when one day, soon after she went home to Northampton, he called on her. The next day, they climbed Mt. Holyoke together, and were in the midst of a happy comparison of thoughts and purposes, when, wishing to be free to touch bush or branch in the wood path, and not liking to spoil the new gloves she had on, she, like a prudent maiden, drew them off, never thinking of the white hand, so beautiful it could not but attract attention. Not knowing that guileless soul, he was slightly repelled by what struck him as a possible trick of feminine vanity. It was something simpler and nobler he had thought he saw in her, and the little circumstance checked the friendship. For a year there was no advance beyond a fitful, occasional correspondence. "You will smile," she writes him afterward, "when I say that your silence has repeatedly done me good, by showing me from my disappointment how much my heart still cleaved to the world, and how much my happiness still depended on objects of time and sense." But her attraction toward the seldom seen stranger was slowly dying out, and life beginning to take on sober tints, as she walked on her way in the faithful round of home and church duties, when suddenly came her father's fatal illness. Impulsively, and as a

vent to her overburdened heart, she told her anxiety and distress to him, as a letter of his was just then waiting for an answer. In response to his next one, she told him of her father's death. His reply awakened a deeper sentiment of friendship than she had felt before. She recognized a comprehension of her deepest experiences, and a sympathy sufficient for even that time of distress.

> "The links that bound their hearts together,
> They were not forged in sunny weather,
> Nor will they moulder and decay
> As the long hours pass away;
> What slighter things cannot endure
> Will make their love more safe and pure."

Early in December he was to visit her in Northampton. He had, in the fall, become a pastor in North Bridgewater (now Brockton), Mass. The sudden prevalence of scarlet fever in his parish made him feel it wrong to leave his people for any personal end. She writes to him, December 9, 1833, "I am sorry to have your intended visit deferred, though I am the last one who would wish you to leave your people in a time of special affliction, for your own or my gratification. I know too well the value of a pastor's visits at such a time wantonly to deprive others of them."

To the same she writes, December 16, "Self-reproach is a frequent and unprofitable exercise.

I have found, upon analyzing my feelings, that it has often been nothing more than a kind of penance for the indulgence of some darling sin. I have been contented to make myself unhappy, rather than simply to repent and forsake my sin. Surely this is unacceptable as well as unwise. It cannot please our Heavenly Father to see us wretched. On the contrary, the provision he has made for our happiness proves that he desires it. How much we need to offer the prayer, 'Lord, increase our faith.' If Edwards's views of the dealings of God are correct, surely no other feelings should be excited in our hearts, when enduring affliction, but those of grateful love. I think there is no way in which we can obtain such a sense of the love of God, as by contemplating the manner in which he enables his people to resist and overcome sin; we can never realize what an evil and bitter thing it is, unless we are made to taste some of its evils.

"A happy home has been my idol, and it was at this the blow was aimed; for, dear as this spot is and ever must be to my heart, it can never seem like home to me again. It is my desire to live henceforth like a pilgrim and stranger on the earth. I know, if the spirit is willing, the flesh is *very* weak, but I know, too, He is faithful who promised, who also will do it."

At Christmas time the deferred visit was made, and they were pledged to each other.

"I am but too happy," she writes, January 3, 1834, "in the consciousness that I have given my heart and my happiness to one who possesses my entire confidence, and who I know will love me better than I can ever deserve. In heart we are already *one.* Henceforth my happiness will consist in sharing your joys and sorrows, in relieving your cares, and by every means in my power making your home a peaceful and happy retreat from the anxieties of your arduous duties."

January 11.—"To say that I can part with so many near and dear friends, under the thousand ties that have been accumulating and attaching me to this loved spot, *even for you*, without pain, would be a libel on the better feelings of our nature. Surely, you would neither love nor respect me could you believe it possible. Mr. Todd told me I should have so many things to occupy my attention, I should not think much of society. But enough on this point. My greatest fear is that I shall not realize your expectations. You have formed a much higher opinion of me than I deserve. One thing I can say in sincerity, I *desire* to be all that you have described, and that from the first it has been my determination never to let my feelings interfere with the most self-denying

duties to which you may be called. I wish to feel that we are united in the service of our Redeemer, that we belong wholly to him, and that we must find our happiness in promoting the interests of his kingdom. I feel that we must specially guard ourselves on this point, lest we become so much engrossed in our personal happiness as to forget our higher and holier obligations. We know our Heavenly Father is not displeased when we are happy in the enjoyment of his rich blessings. We know, too, that he is not pleased when we *rest* here.

"Is it a continual effort for a true Christian to keep his heart on spiritual things, or does it rise spontaneously to heaven? David says, 'When I awake I am still with thee.' Ought we, or ought we not, to require this heavenly state of mind as an evidence of discipleship? I have been much tried of late with these questions, for I do not find that deadness to the world which I think I ought to possess. You will have a wayward heart to guide in the straight and narrow way, but with all its imperfections it will never know change in its devotion to you."

While she was still expecting and hoping to be a pastor's wife, an old friend, Mrs. President Wheeler, of the Vermont University, wrote her: "My dear, I know you do not intend to have your happiness consist in having every earthly circumstance suited to

your taste. The wife of a minister of the gospel must rise above this and breathe in a higher air. She must find her happiness in doing good, and her reward not in the notice or admiration of the world."

In January, 1834, it was proposed to her friend Mr. Thompson to leave his parish and take the professorship of Hebrew in the new theological seminary about to be established at Windsor Hill, Conn. She writes, January 28: "I felt unwilling at first to say a word about it, lest it should influence your decision improperly; but since you have asked my opinion, I will give it frankly. The more I think of the matter, the more *I am averse to your acceptance of the appointment.* I cannot think your opportunities of usefulness can be so great as in the station you now occupy, and it does not seem to me so responsible or important an office. It may be one of more ease and personal gratification, but I have greatly mistaken your character if those motives would influence you a moment. If you were truly called of God to North Bridgewater, methinks you can hardly have accomplished so soon the work appointed for you there. I have heard Mr. Todd speak of this institution, but so slightly that I hardly know whether he approves of its establishment or not. Indeed, I have hardly known any thing about it, and but little more of Taylorism, to which it is opposed. As far

as I am informed in this particular, I should agree with them; but I fear that if this has not been got up in a party spirit, it will excite such a spirit. At any rate, those connected with it must almost necessarily be constantly engaged in controversy. That, certainly, is very undesirable. I have perhaps spoken rashly. Further light may alter my opinion, but as it is, it strikes me it would be foolish for you to go. There is not sufficient inducement to make it your duty to leave the ministry, especially when the call for laborers is so great. If you decide to go, forget what I have said, and be assured I shall acquiesce in whatever arrangement you may be led in the Providence of God to make.

"I have mentioned it to no one but Daniel, and he laconically replied, 'He had better stay where he is.' It shall be my increasing prayer that God will guide you with heavenly wisdom, that you may be delivered from all unhallowed motives and secure his approbation."

February 4. — "I have feared, since I wrote, that I spoke too hastily and too decidedly considering the light I had on the subject, and though I have seen as yet no reason for altering my opinion, I have thought perhaps I ought not to have expressed one. Be assured of this one thing, my loved friend, where you are, there is my home and there shall I be happy.

"I cannot tell you half how precious your miniature is to me. It has a small black string attached to it, and is entirely concealed in the folds of my dress, so that I can wear it without attracting observation. The longer I look at it, the more distinctly can I trace your image.

"Willingly can I leave every other friend and dwell with you. My friend, Elizabeth S., left this morning for New York, to try the effect of change and sea air. I fear she will never be better. Companions from childhood, and bosom friends for years, I often looked forward to the time when, in fulfilment of a mutual promise, I should stand as bridesmaid by her side."

April 4. — "I was in the garden this morning, watching the progress of the flowers, and after some searching espied a 'Forget-me-not,' the first flower that has opened its delicate petals to welcome the spring. I enclose it for you. Look on it and think of 'one who will forget thee *never*.'"

The following June, Mr. Thompson's call to the Connecticut Seminary, which, after serious consideration, he had declined in the winter, was repeated; a committee visited him, and pressed his acceptance by the most perplexing appeals to his conscience and spirit of self-sacrifice.

"I did hope," Eliza Butler writes, "that the call

from Windsor would not be renewed. My personal feeling about it remains unchanged, but you know, my dear friend, I would not have that influence your decision either way."

After long debate, the perseverance of the Connecticut committee was rewarded by his consent to the call of a council to whom the whole matter should be referred. He accepted their decision, and after a pastorate of one year, left Bridgewater for Windsor. True to her word, when the decision was made, Eliza Butler accepted it quietly, buried her bright dreams of sharing with him the parish life, which had a peculiar attraction for her, and poured out her sympathy for him in the experience which he wrote her was "like tearing limb from limb."

Once before that she had written, "I dreamed last night that you were here, and had decided not to leave Bridgewater." But after this no more is said. It was not till years had passed, and her children were grown, that any one knew what it had cost them both to go cheerfully to Windsor.

"It matters little," she writes him, "in what part of the vineyard it shall be, if we are found at last to be faithful laborers. I feel in your society the wilderness would lose its gloom and the desert its dreariness. In contributing to your happiness and enjoying your love, my days would pass on, I might almost

say, unmarked by a shade of sorrow; but that would be an unreal picture, too full of joy for this transitory life.

"I can never be sufficiently grateful for the gift of such a friend, whose sympathy and affection I have so much reason to value; but, by the help of God, my dearest friend, I will not suffer you to do the work of an enemy and wean my affections from my Saviour. I have found by bitter experience, that even your love, precious as it is, would be a poor compensation for the loss of his favor."

June 26. — "I do feel that our affection is not of a selfish, worldly nature, but a hallowed flame, and one that I trust will grow brighter and brighter to eternity. The more my heart expands with love to God, and I feel the presence of my Saviour, the more strongly is my heart bound to you. I have just returned from Miss D.'s, where I have spent an hour in prayer and conversation with her and another sister. Miss D. spoke of the importance of seeking and caring for the health of the soul with the same earnestness we do for the body. If we watch and pray in any measure as we ought, shall we not know when the soul is diseased, and apply the remedy? Miss D. spoke of the duty of Christians inquiring of each other, when they meet, the state of their soul's health, and thought the reserve on this subject a device of the adversary."

The love that had been born in shadow was not nursed wholly in sunshine. Aside from the trial of feeling in regard to leaving Bridgewater, there were perplexities of another nature. After her father's sudden death, it was found he had so involved himself by loans to a relative who had failed in business, that his estate settled far differently from what had been expected. Instead of having the means to furnish her new home with every comfort, as she had hoped, in the autumn, she had the pain and mortification of finding, before the spring opened, that her outfit must not only be curtailed, but managed with the utmost economy. Debts were held in that family to be more binding than any matter of feeling or personal comfort, and Eliza acquiesced in the course taken by her mother, to pay from her own private income her husband's obligations as far as possible, while all outlay, even for the daughter's marriage, was brought within the strictest limits.

The respect in which he had been held, and the knowledge that his embarrassments were the results of nothing more than excess of confidence and kindness, did not prevent some of the wealthier creditors from profiting by the honorable self-sacrifice of the widow and children, while others less able refused to allow them to straiten and cripple themselves.

It was with a rather heavy heart that Eliza wrote

to Mr. Thompson, "If you had seen me last night, you would have seen a long face and a sad one." After stating the difficulty, she says: "Your disappointment is not the least fruitful source of sadness. I did not like to have the family see how much I felt, and it was not till I had retired to the solitude of my room that I gave vent to my feelings. The image of my beloved father came to mind, who would have relieved me from all this care, but who was now cold and silent in the grave, beyond the reach of the wants or affection of his child. But I was not alone. I felt there was One who by these little disappointments was making me realize the permanency and value of his love. Have we not, my beloved friend, committed our way unto him, and besought him not to leave us to ourselves, and shall we now withdraw our trust and murmur because he is answering our prayer and leading us by a way we know not? I think I can say, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.'

"I went out to walk this morning, called on Mrs. T., found her in great anxiety for one of her children who is quite ill, — that bright, black-eyed little girl you saw there. The little boy has also been sick, and Mr. B. has an infant son on the verge of the grave. Here is *real trouble*, and I thought how selfish and sinful I was to feel unhappy for a moment, because every

wish of my heart could not be gratified. I hope your feelings are under better control than mine have been. I have dreaded to tell you what I know you would not love to hear, especially at this time when you feel such a weight of anxiety; but still I felt that sooner or later you must know it, and I should not mend the matter by deferring it."

In the next letter her unconquerable hope begins to brighten. She thinks it much "harder for Daniel than for herself, because after having been engaged a year, this trouble will oblige him to defer his marriage two years more."

Their wedding-day was finally fixed for September. Her busy hands were more than full with sewing and preparation, but till within a fortnight of the time, she went on with her daily study and recitations at Miss D.'s, only pausing then because she must, and promising herself that they should be resumed immediately after her marriage.

"You would be gratified," she writes, "to hear the many kind expressions of affection and regret which I hear on every side, not only from my particular friends and associates, but from those with whom I have incidentally been brought in contact in the humbler walks of life. I shall be in danger of thinking of myself more highly than I ought to think."

Referring to some arrangements, she says, in a

letter of August 28: "We do indeed need to possess our souls in patience. There is nothing that naturally tries me more than this state of suspense, but I am happy to say it has this time not in the least ruffled my spirit. I feel at this moment perfectly willing Providence should order each event as Infinite Wisdom determines. I have in general been able to take things quietly."

In the last letters before her marriage, she says: "In thinking of the best means of promoting our happiness and usefulness in the married state, it occurred to me much advantage would accrue from the habit of conversing with freedom and confidence on our personal experience in religion. Unless we are on our guard, there is danger that the duties of the family and the thousand interesting occurrences of the day will preclude this important topic.

"It requires no effort to picture myself by your side on the banks of the beautiful river we visited in July, with its deep green woods and its calm surface reposing in the soft, still moonbeam. Aside from the tender recollections associated with the falling leaf, autumn is to me a hallowed season. If it is sad, it is a cheerful sadness. The vigor and freshness of spring seem like the commencement of a new existence, but when that freshness is gone and that vigor decays, we feel that the fashion of this world passes

away, and we are hastening to the rest of eternity. This, while it chastens our happiness, need not diminish it, and while it makes us grave, need not make us sad.

"It is almost impossible for us to realize the extent of the influence we shall exert upon each other, both in spiritual and temporal things, and unless the Lord hallow that influence, it will drag our affections earthward. My dear William, the bars of the grave will undoubtedly close upon one of us, and leave the other desolate, and were it not for the hope of blessed reunion beyond its narrow precincts, the thought of an attachment like ours would be miserable."

The last entry in her diary is dated August 24, 1834. "I am looking forward in a few weeks to the most important earthly connection ever formed, one that will materially affect my happiness and usefulness in this world, and my hopes beyond the grave. I bless God for giving me such a precious friend as I possess in his servant, that I have been kept from giving my affections to one who did not love Christ, and have been permitted to bestow them upon one who is consecrated to his service. And now, blessed Saviour, smile upon us, and if we are permitted to pitch our tabernacle and dwell together, may we so regulate our affections and conduct that we shall aid

each other in every duty, promote each other's growth in grace, and exert a happy influence on those around us. And now I renewedly consecrate myself to thee; all the affections of my soul, this *precious friend,* all that I have or may have, to thee and thy service. Help me to resolve to perform the duties of a wife, and the head of a family, according to the requisitions of thy Word. I now resolve to give my husband my undivided confidence and love, to obey him in the Lord; never to stand in the way of his duty, or hold him back from self-denial and suffering for the sake of Christ, but aid him in every duty by my prayers, counsel, and efforts, as God shall give me grace. His friends shall be my friends, his interests mine. Resolved to honor God in my family, to order my household according to his word, to honor the Sabbath, and to be governed by the directions of God in the various relations of the family. Resolved to be hospitable to strangers, kind to the afflicted, and above all to lend my influence, time, and talents to the promotion of Christ's kingdom in the earth. Blessed Saviour, thou hast heard these solemn vows; thou knowest my weakness and depravity, — that, if left to myself, I shall not be able to redeem them. Wilt thou magnify the riches of thy grace, perfect thy strength in my weakness, and use me and mine as instruments for thy glory."

The wedding was on the 25th of September, 1834. "I very distinctly remember her appearance on that morning," writes one of her cousins. "She was rather tall and slight; her whole bearing was entirely self-possessed, and in her artless, girlish simplicity she seemed to stand there because she had been told to." In the little book which holds her wedding bouquet, there is a pressed violet not wholly faded yet.

Their wedding journey, which gave them a glimpse of the Vermont mountains and Lake George, lasted a week or two, and in October they arrived at Windsor, where the Theological Seminary was opening its first session.

It is amusingly characteristic of her life-long indifference to what she thought unessential, that in a letter from her sister Maria, which met her at New York on this trip, she is exhorted to wear "a white shawl, not the red one, if the weather grows cool, as the white one is more proper."

CHAPTER III.

THE HEAT AND BURDEN OF THE DAY.

III.

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"Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand.
. . . . .
To us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm!
Therefore to thee it was given
Many to save with thyself."

ARNOLD.

"YOUR mother was a lovely bride," a dear friend used to say. "I shall never forget how her face looked, when she first came into our house, in her cottage bonnet tied down with a white ribbon. Her complexion was exquisite, not red, but pink and white, and besides being so pretty, she had such a look of goodness."

One of her first joys was the meeting with her husband's family, his father having removed from Norwich to Windsor the year before. "Her manner was winning and very quiet," says a sister; "but what drew us to her most, at first, was the expression of her eyes, so beautiful, clear, and true," —

"Eyes too expressive to be blue,
Too lovely to be gray."

From the moment of the first kiss of welcome to "William's wife," there was, to the end, on both sides, warmth and constancy of love.

The strength of his mother's character impressed her at once and increasingly. "Your Grandmother Thompson was a remarkable woman," was one of her common sayings in after years; and she always insisted that the tie of blood could not have made the two sisters more truly sisters to her. With so much positiveness of character on all sides, one must believe there was opportunity for friction; but for them,

"Love was always lord of all."

Whatever tears were to be shed, as separation and death came in the different circles, there were never mingled those of broken confidence.

For a year the home was in Mr. Ellsworth's family, and there the first child came and went.

In October of 1835 their house was finished, and they began housekeeping in it, gathering as many family friends as possible around them when they sat down for the first time at their own table. There was no lack of quiet merry-making; but at the close it was with the hush of hearts that realized what is wrapped up in the founding of a new home, that they knelt and consecrated it with fervent prayer.

The region of the Seminary was charming, as is all

of the Connecticut Valley. One enthusiastic friend of the institution, standing for the first time on the brow of the hill and looking off on the winding river, the meadows, and the old elms, exclaimed with emphasis, "The millennium will begin here."

The new Professor's house, however, was planted literally in a sand-bank. There was not a blade of grass or a tree, nothing to fill out the idea of home to eyes from which the Pleasant Street picture had not yet faded.

Eliza Butler had recorded, in the diary of her girlhood, her longings for a missionary life, and a desire to serve God in India or the Sandwich Islands. She now found herself called upon to meet many of the privations and to make the peculiar sacrifices of such a life, with none of its romance to smooth the way. The enterprise with which she and her husband were identified was struggling, doubtful, unpopular. Funds were scarce, the salary a pittance, the atmosphere necessarily one of debate and antagonism. "I was at the sewing-society yesterday," wrote Maria Butler, from Northampton, to her sister, during that first year, "and the girls were mourning over you. They said Eliza Butler was being spoiled, her letters were full of nothing but Taylorism and Tylerism."

In her new surroundings she was easily fired with the same ardent belief in the essential nature of the

doctrinal distinctions of the Seminary, which had inspired its founders. Once convinced that Christ's kingdom was to be furthered by the institution, all her single-hearted devotion was turned into that channel.

That remarkable hereditary resemblance to the grandmother, with whom the church leaders of her day had discussed doctrine and precept, now came out in the granddaughter. She entered with zeal into the theological discussions about her, and grasped the various points with clearness and force.

It was said of her, by David N. Lord, of the Theological Review, who knew Mrs. Thompson in these years, that he had never met a lady so intelligently informed on theological subjects. It was partly due to the cast of her mind, delighting in this as in any other science, and partly to the profound genuineness of her spiritual nature, which transfused with its own warmth whatever related to religion.

There was no such thing as debasing the moral currency in her presence. Something in the solid dignity of that true face silenced the flippant word.

To the child at her knee uttering what to her seemed passionate blasphemy out of its too early protesting and stormy soul, she had something to offer better perhaps than the convincing word, — the sudden whitening of her cheek, which made evi-

dent beyond any doubt her own reverent love for God.

The strong conservatism of her mind fitted her to work naturally in her new relations. She was extremely tenacious in every direction, averse to all changes, assenting with reluctance and long debate even to those which time afterward taught her had been altogether best. Wherever she took rest, either in feeling, thought, custom, or place, there it was her tendency to abide firmly. Up to the last of her life she placed no reliance on the daily weather indications, because, not having cared to investigate the grounds on which their value rested, she classed them in general with "signs" and heathenish divinations, which in her girlhood Dr. Spencer had taught her were "of the adversary."

She looked with alarm on changes of method as in danger of involving change of essence. In that intricate composition of forces by which some guard and some explore, and the resultant is safe advance, her part was with the guard.

That practical good sense whose germs had been plainly visible in her earlier life, began to develop rapidly under the new circumstances.

If there were theological students, they and their rooms must be made comfortable; and the housekeeping had hardly begun, when a certain attic-

closet was set apart for clothing and bedding for that purpose. It was deposited with her by the ladies' sewing-societies of the region, and much of it made under her own supervision by the circle of ladies in the town, over which she presided, and in which she worked unsparingly for years. She distributed what was gathered, with motherly sympathy and discriminating care. One great secret of her triumphant life was her habit of distinguishing between great and little things. Little things were not to be minded, — momentary discomforts, trifling annoyances, or physical pain, unless it was extreme. Her tender heart and her well-balanced mind went side by side with her deep religious convictions, in the drawing of this line, and kept her from great errors. When it was drawn, it was found to bar out on the side of trifles, what the majority of men and women find great enough for controlling motives. She was thus free to follow steadily worthy ends. She steered straight by the unessential, content to miss much, while she pressed toward the mark. It was this — this heroism of noble purposes and high conceptions, and her courage born of faith — that made her very face and voice such a stimulus and help. "Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn" flew away where she entered.

All this, however, was not full grown when my father and mother set about turning the sand-bank

into a home. She remembered, afterward, more than one heart-sinking, and more than one tear brushed away before it could be seen.

The step from the girlish Sunday-afternoon musing "by her favorite window" into the intricacies of life, of which those musings had given her no hint, was one to test the fibre of ardent aspirations. The problems that meet all women who have any strength of nature met her. Her experience was nowhere shallow. But it was her habit to grapple with difficulties rather than to sink under them or to chafe too long. The young face, that looked confidingly out from under the cottage-bonnet as she stepped from the carriage, in the light of the yellow maples and the sunset of that October day which brought her to the Ellsworth mansion, concealed unguessed reserves of force.

Many a time, later, she laughed, in recounting how the seeds they first planted in the garden blew away, the soil was so light. But every trip to Northampton brought back stores of bulbs, shrubs, and choice apple-tree cuttings; the perseverance that would not be baffled found out that clay would conquer sand, and before the children were old enough to remember, maples and locusts, horse-chestnuts and fir-trees, were growing everywhere. There were willows by the little brook, shrubs in the ravine,

terraces, vines on the arbor trellis, flowers of every sort in the garden, and in every nook where they could be put; and for the winter, what blooming of callas, of pink cactuses in blue jars, of heliotropes and carnations, what trailing of ivies and passion-flowers!

In the spring, when the turf was green and the orchard in bloom, and the bees were humming among the hyacinths and daffodils, she delighted to recall the contrast, with a feeling that the now lovely place had been created by a determination to succeed.

Little by little cares thickened. The time for pursuing Latin and philosophy did not come. Much that had been anticipated slipped into the list of things deferred, and a sort of unconscious, undramatic silence flowed over them, while the tides of cheerful, active life rose and fell more and more strongly above.

How can it be told what those years were! The enterprise to which her husband had given all the hope and ambition of his youth dragged slowly on. Every step was a struggle. Funds accumulated slowly, and salaries continued small, while wants increased. Every year large subscriptions were made from that meagre sum to the Seminary, because it was felt to be for Christ's sake, while the empty

library shelves in the husband's study remained unfilled, and the needs of the growing family were supplied only by the closest economy and strictest industry on the part of the young mother. The slender white hands grew used to all sorts of household toil. Others gave thought, sympathy, money, — they gave not only that, but literally themselves. Never, but for a few months, in all the period of her housekeeping, did she have a house-maid who could render any but the most indifferent service. And never, but for periods of a few weeks, had she any one to assist in the care of the children. When there were five, as when there was one, it was she who was seamstress, nursery-maid, and often cook.

The week before her wedding, she said to her friend Elizabeth, as they walked down the street, having a last talk, that her great dread was of not being equal to what would befall her. "I am not quick, you know," she said. "I cannot turn off things as some can, and a great deal of the time I do not feel strong." "No, Eliza Butler," was the answer, "but you can *endure*. That will be worth more to you than quickness." Her own sense of weariness or illness she always concealed till it reached the point of positive disease, and she had to succumb. Often, she used to say, she had held herself in her chair at her sewing, when from nervous exhaustion

it seemed every moment as if she must scream and throw the work aside; but always held herself there until it was done, taking so many patient, interminable stitches in the little coats and aprons, before the days of sewing-machines and ready-made garments, sitting up late with the aching back and head, that only mothers know, to turn and mend and make over, after the hard long day and wakeful nights with the babies, so that what her skill and labor saved might go to pay the subscription to the Seminary and build up the good cause.

It was in such days as these that many a student, oppressed with poverty and unable to meet his board-bills, was welcomed for months at their table, with a hospitality so cheerful that it was many a time unappreciated. Aside from the deliberate sacrifices made for Christ's sake, no kind of pain or want appealed to her in vain. If there was ever a house where there were "tears for all woes, a heart for all distress," it was theirs. Effort, trouble, discomfort, were not reckoned. In summer and winter, no matter what the accumulated basket of sewing, or whether Bridget was in the kitchen or not, she was ready to go to the sick, to watch with them, to use her skill in making the arrowroot or beef-tea, that no one else could do quite so well. There was no comfortable hotel in the village, so that, among others,

their house naturally became a home for all friends of the Seminary, travelling ministers, or agents; and in all cases there was but one thought, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The only exception ever known was in the early days of her housekeeping, when a certain brother tarried long, and was finally discovered to have adopted the guest-room closet as the depository of his horse-blanket, when, with a spark of righteous indignation, the young matron repaired to the study, and announced that *that* she could not submit to.

Consecration was no mystery to her, but a most practical experience. The social training of her youth was offered on the same altar with greater gifts. Seeing that the students needed more social life than they were likely to have, for their pleasure and their good, twice every year she gave them an entertainment, inviting seventy or more, as it happened, quite regardless of the fact that the cake must be made with her own hands, and the ice-cream churned by an interminable process in her own cellar. She had seldom time to arrange her hair, in these days, after the fashion of her girlhood, but sometimes for these special occasions she did, and her appearance is well remembered, as she welcomed her guests with a sweet sincerity that set the whole evening in the right key.

More than once it happened that after the invitations were given, her husband would be attacked with violent sick-headache, to which he was subject nearly every week. She would come from bathing his head, to receive her company, without a sign of disquiet, or hint in face or manner, of confusion and disappointment.

How she was valued by the students is well told by the tribute of Dr. E. W. Bentley, read at the Seminary anniversary in 1879.

"Very rarely, for a long course of years, has this anniversary failed of the light and cheer of Mrs. Thompson's presence. Indeed, so identified was she with the social element of our anniversary, that to many of us this day's home-coming is akin, in its chastened sadness, to the Thanksgiving anniversary in the homestead whence the mother's face and form are gone for ever. Mrs. Thompson was the connecting link between many of us and much that is pleasantest and longest-lived in our seminary associations. Whatever may be true since the removal of the Seminary to the city, and the consequent widening of the social circle around it, I feel warranted in saying that at East Windsor Hill, our seminary 'home-life' centred largely in Mrs. Thompson. Our circumstances there were somewhat peculiar. Our numbers all told were few, and class distinctions, however informal and loosely held, narrowed still more the area of our restricted intimacies. Most of us were fresh from our large college associations with their attendant and varied excitements, and we found it hard to settle ourselves down into the narrow grooves in which our seminary life seemed to drag itself along. And

the outside neighborhood was nearly as contracted as the Seminary. The families who cared for our acquaintance, though cultured and refined and hospitable, were still infrequent and scattered. And thus isolated, the homelike ease and restfulness of Mrs. Thompson's parlor and sitting-room, near at hand, drew us thither when we cared to go nowhere else. In those days Mrs. Thompson's family circle was unbroken. The law of love hedged gently in her group of children. . . . Happening in at whatever hour, we found a cheerful welcome. Doubtless we wearied her often with our budgets of personal interests and petty concerns; but if so she never disclosed the fact. Encouraged by her sympathy, we made her the confidante of hopes and struggles and aspirations, such as grown-up boys intrust only to their mothers or elder sisters. In the occasional social gatherings to which we were invited in the neighborhood, it was Mrs. Thompson's quick notice and kindly tact that placed us at once at ease, and drew the best side of us socially to the front. Some of us — I speak for the more awkward and bashful ones among us — almost uniformly rated our enjoyment of the hour by her presence or absence.

"Still another service Mrs. Thompson rendered us. She was an admirable critic. She grasped a subject firmly, and examined it firmly and leisurely. And especially did its strong points never escape her. She had in full training an eye for proportions. Nothing that was mismatched or unbalanced or lop-sided eluded her notice. Hence her suggestions concerning subjects and modes of treating them — subjects which in many cases subsequently grew into essays and addresses and sermons — were of special use to us in our raw apprenticeship. In our debates and public exercises, which she did penance in attending with persistent regularity, her presence and intelligent interest gave us cour-

age and stimulated endeavor. Some of us will never forget how patiently she followed us through our protracted discussion of the 'Maine Law,' beginning some time in January, in the Seminary chapel, and ending along in March, down at the South Windsor Lecture Room. An immense service of this kind, a service which only a rare delicacy of perception like hers could discern and appreciate the importance of, Mrs. Thompson rendered to the students year after year; encouraging them to undertake literary work, broadening their area of thought, and keeping them toned up to a high key of earnestness and zeal.

"Another way in which Mrs. Thompson served us most efficiently was through her devoted attachment to the Seminary and her familiarity with its principles and aims. To present this service in its entirety would compel me to enlarge upon the peculiar position of the Institute at that time, and to speak of difficulties and temptations which tended to shake our faith in it and to break down our loyalty to it. But this is neither the time nor place for such a showing. It is enough to say that, both from within and without, a pressure was put upon us, sometimes annoying and at all times troublesome. We were young men with aspirations for usefulness and ambitious of success. We were desirous to know and obey the truth, but at the same time did not want, if we could help it, to be put without the pale of popular sympathy and support.

"And in steadying us under these malign influences, I think no agency was more potential than Mrs. Thompson's. She seemed to have an instinctive knowledge of the presence and weight of these disturbing forces, and combated them with a quiet tact and assiduity. She believed in the Seminary with all her heart. She understood its relations to other seminaries, and to the commonwealth of the churches. She com-

prehended its mission, and was rooted and grounded in the faith of its distinctive character and work. And the earnestness and enthusiasm of her convictions were contagious. She seemed never to be troubled with doubts and misgivings. Whoever else was discouraged, her faith was unshaken. I *believe* there were times when, if Mrs. Thompson had lost heart or hope, the Seminary would have been closed by the wasting away of its classes; and I *certainly know* that there were times when the work which she did in keeping up courage and inspiring content among the students was simply heroic. I am free to confess that the fulness of my sympathy with the Seminary and my confidence in its errand and life, came to me through the persuasiveness of Mrs. Thompson's far-sighted and strong convictions.

"Still another channel of Mrs. Thompson's influence over the every-day life of the Seminary was her piety. It would have been strange if she had not been a theologian. The activity and acuteness of her intellect, playing in a theological atmosphere, rendered that a necessity. Her piety rested back upon a foundation of truth systematically laid. And to that foundation she adhered with unswerving fidelity. She was unyielding as a rock, where principle was concerned, true as steel to her conscientious views of truth and duty.

"But on the other hand, out of her theology, as out of a deep and carefully cultivated soil, there grew a verdure of exquisite grace and beauty. What her head perceived and what her heart felt, her voice, eye, and hand showed forth. Loving, genial, gentle, tenderly considerate of the happiness of others, stirred to sympathetic action by the slightest signal of sorrow or want, she easily made for herself a straight passage-way into the inner recesses of the life of those about her. With a winning sweetness she touched here a doubt, and it was dissolved; there a fear, and it vanished away; and

anon a hope, and it flashed into a flame. And so graceful and loving was the ministry, that you discerned in it far less of *her* than of Him in whose name she ministered.

"And this blending of strength with beauty, of rigidity with grace, of ornament with use, was a lucid commentary upon the truths which we were daily handling. A system which issued in such a life, and a life that so adorned the system, we knew had an eternal fitness and a divine sanction. The argument from such an example was conclusive. We were not laboring in vain nor spending our strength for naught. The Word, in manner and form as unfolded to us, was suited to win the world to heaven."

Whatever the emergency, the greater it was, the calmer she grew, concentrating all on the duty of the moment, and not showing, till all was over, the strain of self-control. Some traits of her great-grandfather, the wise old physician, showed here.

Doctors rejoiced to meet her at the sick-bed, knowing she could be relied on not to flinch or fail, and never to let her own ease hinder the doing of what ought to be done. Can any one who ever felt what her care in sickness was ever express or ever forget it? The touch of her hand was an anodyne. It was so tender and so firm, while her sweet, pitying look carried a kind of assurance of relief. It was

"Continual comfort in a face,"

when she bent over the hot pillow, soothing, ministering, bringing broth that was exactly right, watch-

ing the long nights through, and for successive weeks giving no sign of weariness, except in the fading of the pink in her cheeks and the slow whitening about her dear, patient mouth.

She was all this to others besides husband and children. It was her hand that smoothed the way to death for the mother-in-law, whose home was with them for the last year of her life, and whom she treated with the most unfailing love and honor. It was her privilege to watch by her own mother in her last illness, in 1849, and be with her at the close. When the fatal illness came to her niece at Piermont, there was no hand like Aunt Eliza's to wait upon her, feeding her soul with living bread while she comforted the wasting body. How many dying eyes she closed, into how many dying ears she spoke the name of Him who lived in her, while she so loved and gave herself for them.

In 1842 she had what was supposed to be a fatal attack of lung-fever. The physician, a most incompetent one, had given her up. A weeping group was standing round her bed, expecting the great change every moment, when her lips moved slightly, and they caught a whisper. It sounded like "spirit." It was thought to refer to her parting soul; and they were straining their ears to hear if perhaps she would finish what would be her last word of faith, when the

same whisper came again. "Oh," said the doctor, starting from his paralysis, "she means for us to give her spirits. Quick! she may have it. Is there any here?" Before the spoon could be brought to her lips, her jaws were set so firmly that they were obliged to pry them open, and he succeeded in pouring a little into her mouth. She swallowed it; another spoonful was brought, and she swallowed that. The pulse began to beat faintly again, while every breath was held in that agony of suspense almost worse than despair. The treatment was repeated, and she came back to her husband, and the three little children who were sleeping, all unconscious of the love that was stronger than death.

She well remembered the experience, the feeling that she was slipping away, the thought that she *must not* die, that brandy would save her, and the effort to utter the word.

It was a very characteristic act; one flutter of fear would have turned the scale, but of fear she knew little.

Phantoms that haunt the darkness, possible burglars, all imaginary dangers, were idle folly to her mind. The differing temperament of some of her children was a puzzle to her. If a brooding dove should hatch orioles, or a swan sea-gulls, there might be something of the same surprise. The

causes of the desire for a lamp at night, the dread of going alone into a dark room or even into the cellar, the ecstasies and glooms and unregulated outbursts, were beyond her ken. She yielded to the decision of the father, that these things should be respected as beyond the child's control, and they were well comprehended by him, — but with an evident mortification, as at a sign of weakness or lack of right reason. Any thing in any direction that could be termed silly, she could ill brook.

There are faithful, true mothers, who yet are never exactly motherly; but this one had not only the mother-heart for all the suffering world, the brooding, helpful impulse toward all sorrow and need, but the sweet comfortableness that knows just how to gather the tired baby limbs into her arms, and smile and kiss away the little troubles. Their play was dear to her, and her laugh was as merry as theirs. No matter what mountains of sewing were waiting and pressing, she took time to devise some happy surprises for the New Year, birthday-cakes and wreaths as each birthday came round; to consider dolls for the girls and kites for the boys.

Not all the instruction she perseveringly gave them in Scripture or Catechism so interpreted infinite love and sacrifice to their hearts, as her patient step on the stair, climbing with tired feet to soothe

their fright or toothache. Love that could do and suffer and never fail, was the one thing that was always sure. They might sometimes weary a little of the distinction between moral and natural ability and inability, their precise connection with Adam's fall, and the exact way in which imputation of sin and righteousness fits into the Divine government; but their own existence was not surer than the deep unselfishness of her daily life, and her most impressive teachings were those most unconsciously given.

> "The blessed Master, who can doubt,
> Revealed in saintly lives."

They knew something real came from that daily morning visit to the only quiet room where the door could be locked, and the serious eagerness on her face when she sat studying her red Bible stole profoundly into their hearts, while it was still a hopeless puzzle what could so delight her in the Prophets and the Psalms.

"Other worldliness," that half-hypercritical, half-fanatical way of ridding one's self of the duties of this life by absorption with the next, is apt to react on those nearly connected in disgust and scepticism. *Unworldliness* is as comforting as it is logical. The realness and simplicity of her nature would have made the life of a genuine "society woman" impossible to her.

That intricate system of half truths and whole falsehoods, in which words and deeds are nicely adjusted to immediate effect, and social advantage is the widest horizon of the mind, seemed to her a mournful waste. In her vocabulary lying was lying, no matter how skilfully done; and her habit of calling things by their right names made her unconscious directness as inconvenient and uncomfortable at times, as the presence of John the Baptist at Herod's court, or as would be the entrance of St. Francis d'Assisi into a company of modern Epicureans.

Her confiding disposition and her own genuineness made her slow in reading the diagnosis of souls poisoned by the malaria of insincerity. She had none of the sharp suspiciousness which results sometimes from a morbid self-distrust, and sometimes from the limitations of a shallow and calculating nature; but when — as in a life of seventy years who does not? — she found herself deceived and disappointed, she did not grow bitter. There would be a time of quiet thinking, a little absent-mindedness, unusual to the company of children who expected to find her in a certain chair by the west-window, at her work-basket, all eyes and ears for them at every in-rushing from play or school. If some one of them, vaguely seeing what was not understood, stole out for a damask rose to fasten in her dress, she would

turn with a warmer kiss and a sweeter smile than usual, finding in the love that remained compensation for what was lost. The first sharp pang over, and the matter thought through, her resolve was taken.

The letters signed "Yours fondly, faithfully, and for ever," by hands that so easily traced more than the heart meant, were left lying where they were. If there was no more happiness to be had from that source, there might still be some to give. It seemed to her ignoble and unworthy to allow pride to overrule affection. She could still be kind, though she had been mistaken. She could better bear to be thought lacking in "proper resentment" than to know herself lacking in the quality that "beareth and hopeth all things."

"It is a talent to love. I lacked it," says the mother in "Daniel Deronda." "Others have loved me, and I have acted their love," — the key of more tragedies than hers.

The "talent of loving" this mother had. More than one person to whom she was unfailingly generous and patient would be startled to know how accurately she had weighed their motives, and from how much deeper a source than careless good-nature, sprang the unfailing cordiality of her hand.

That constancy and love are not marketable articles as the world goes, did not weigh with this

woman, who followed implicitly that One whose kingdom is not of this world. Having loved his own, did He not love them unto the end? Knowing long and well the falseness of a friend, did He vary in his tender patience? Was He not content to bear and hide all personal wounds, if He only might win the weak, tempted one to a better way? Did He not bend to wash his feet at the last moment, if possibly that final touch of gentleness might save him? She would argue, "It is enough for the disciple to be as his Lord."

She used sometimes to say, "I read and hear a great deal about wasted love. I do not like it or believe it. Such writers call something love that is not it. True love is the rarest thing in the world. There can't be too much of it, and whoever has it to give is the better for it; it can't be wasted." With her usual thoroughness the doctrine was applied in all departments. One morning her daughters came in from the garden with a basket of flowers, with exclamations of delight over their beauty, as they arranged them in the vases, declaring they loved them more than could be told. "No," said she, looking up from her sewing, "you don't love what you are not willing to work for. When you are as ready to weed and transplant as you are to arrange, you may say you *love* flowers."

Her fondness for Scotch history and the Scotch character was always very marked. The stories of the Covenanters, of Claverhouse and his troopers, were household words. She liked to talk of the Highland independence, and to alternate "Scots wha hae with Wallace bled," with "Hush, my dear," in singing the children to sleep.

Snatches of Burns's poetry were often on her lips. She particularly liked the "Epistle to a Young Friend."

> "Ye 'll try the world fu' soon, my lad;
> And, Andrew dear, believe me,
> Ye 'll find mankind an unco squad,
> And muckle they may grieve ye."

Approving with a positive nod when she came to the verse, —

> "But ah! mankind is unco weak,
> And little to be trusted;
> If self the wavering balance shake,
> 'T is rarely right adjusted."

Occasionally, too, she would recite remembered bits of Percival, —

> "I saw on the top of a mountain high,
> A gem that shone like fire by night."

But on the busy week-days there was seldom time for reading aloud. In the pressure of baking and brewing, mending and making, there was scarcely

ever a quiet hour when the mother could allow herself to gather the children round her to hear a story. One day in the week was different from all the rest. Before half past ten, the time for the Sunday morning service, all five of the children were made ready for church, and the Sunday-school lesson reviewed. All went together to the service in the Seminary chapel, morning and afternoon, and to the Sunday-school at noon. Then there was time to learn the Catechism and the hymn to recite at evening prayers, and while the feeling of repression began to relax, the light falling in longer rays across the meadows and the garden, all the fibres of the soul sensitive from the influences of the day, after the hymn had been sung, was the time for reading Pilgrim's Progress. A common book read in her clear voice and natural intonations, if it was the only one, and at that hour, would have been remembered always; but when fiction of all other sorts was forbidden, and children's books were almost unknown, the vivid imagery of that great work seized the imagination with an intense hold, and all human life easily resolved itself into a succession of solitary pilgrimages through the Slough of Despond, up the Hill Difficulty, into the cave of Giant Despair, over the land of Beulah, across the river, and beyond the gates of the shining city.

The book was begun when the youngest child was a baby in the cradle, and read over and over with notes and comments, till the baby was old enough to read it herself, holding that and the kitten together in her lap with an equal affection, in the low chair by the open fire.

When my mother had been married about ten years, the proposition came to her youngest sister to go on a mission to Syria. The circle of young ladies in Northampton, to which the sister belonged, made a great outcry against it, protesting that it was a monstrous sacrifice, and that she should not so bury herself. To them a round of tea-parties and the general comfortableness of refined society seemed a more rational end of existence than to share in the work of putting the story of Jesus Christ into the language of millions, to whom his words and ways were quite unknown. My mother judged differently of ends, and the thought that one so dear to her should not do the best thing was more than she could bear. She broke away from the tangle of household care, and went to Northampton to help the sister fight her battle and hold to her choice. Who that knew her but can see just how she enveloped the right with so cheerful, clear an atmosphere, that the way seemed plain and possible. When her own hands had made the wedding-

cake, and packed the trunks that were to be unpacked so far away, and her strong faith and courage had held up the parting one through the farewells and the setting out, only then she found space for her own tears, and to acknowledge the sharp heart-ache of the separation from one who from babyhood had been her pet and darling.

Distances in those days were greater than now, and for the one who remained in her native valley, it was a long good-by to her who went to live in the shadow of Mt. Lebanon, and among Syrian palms and oleanders. There was no expectation of her return. "Until the resurrection of the just," was as real a part of the good-by, as if the coffin lid had closed upon the cherished face.

The arrival of letters in envelopes queerly cut through in crosswise shape was an event in the household, suggesting to the children their first notions of quarantine, — very vague ones, quarantine figuring in their minds as a sort of fierce tyrant, dressed like a Koord, according to the pictures in the geography, and missionary life assuming a somewhat serious character to their thought, from this dim connection with Asiatic cholera, as well as from the necessity of writing on so very thin paper and having the letters cut in the post-office.

How eagerly she read these letters, entering into

every experience with a love untouched by time or distance, welcoming the distant nieces and nephews as they came to the home she had never seen, packing boxes from time to time for the missionary sister, with such tender heartiness, teaching her children that it was a privilege to send their most cherished keepsakes to those who had gone so far away to teach the heathen people the wonderful love of Christ.

In later years she wrote to a married daughter: "I have noticed that the time of young motherhood, when the children are small, and all one's strength apparently demanded for the care of their physical wants, is a time of great spiritual danger."

But in these very years my mother added to her untiring faithfulness in household duties, persistent striving after closer union with God, feeling that spiritual life was something deeper than a succession of right actions.

That saints in cloisters and retreats should aspire toward holiness and yearn for personal communion with God, we ever find inspiring, and so keep Fénelon and À Kempis on our tables for a portion of our daily food; but there is surely a deeper reverence due to the mother who, training five children under disadvantages such as beset ours, still under and through all seeks growth in the life of the soul, and to know the will of God in every thing.

"Aunt Eliza is not a saint," said a young niece, hearing her called so; "she is bright and happy like the rest of us," seeing no asceticism and not penetrating her secret.

One has only to recall the instances he has known of women whose youthful diaries were full of religious fervor, nearly as ardent as that we find in Eliza Butler's, and whom, a few years later, he has found measuring things by purely worldly standards, all absorbed in securing playmates of good social connections for John and Addie, in arranging Nannie's first party, and selecting baby's sashes, having reduced their religion to a decorous church-going, a mechanical Bible-reading, and a general intention to do "about right,"—he has only to recall it all, to feel there is something worth recording in this living fire of piety, "which many waters of earthly care could not quench, nor floods of toil drown."

The youngest child was still a tiny baby in her arms, when Dr. Spencer published his "Pastor's Sketches," a unique book in its record of soul treatment. His old parishioner read it, and wrote him. His answer has a certain pathos, and reveals his estimate of her.

My very dear Child,—It has given me much pleasure to read your kind letter. The reading is associated with many tender and sacred recollections of past days,

when the sun of your youth and mine (comparatively) was shining in its strength. Now, you the mother of five children? How time rolls on! And are your cheeks as rosy as ever, and your fine hair as flowing? Ah, time changes us! Would that it always prepared us for our last change! I am glad to hear you have not forgotten the serious scenes amid which we once walked together. I am glad if the recollection encourages you or makes you grateful. I trust that the same grace which met you so early in life, and consecrated the bloom of your youth and beauty to God, will attend you to the end, and make you as lovely in the last stage of your pilgrimage as we used to think you in the first. I am greatly obliged to you and to your husband for your kind opinion of my Sketches. You will not be sorry to know that I am receiving daily more and more evidences of its utility.

Farewell, my dear girl. Live near to Christ; you shall soon be near to him in all the bliss and splendors of immortality. God grant it to you, is the fond prayer of

Your affectionate friend and pastor,

I. S. Spencer.

Two years after, she passed through a deep experience in the long, terrible illness of her husband. For many weeks he was so prostrated that the slightest sound was torture to him. It was necessary to send all the younger children from the house, while she wrestled with death for him. The burden of fear and anxiety was an awful one. The physicians attributed his recovery almost wholly to her superhuman efforts and persistent nursing, never

leaving him night or day to any other hand, and never relaxing her labor, even when his life was wholly despaired of. But the mental conflict was most severe. When he slept she drew near to God, and, after throes of anguish, of which she afterward spoke, but could not describe, she was at last able to leave all to her Father in heaven, in submissive confidence. She rested in Him. After these profound conflicts the cloud passed over, and the family were united again, unbroken.

The children were now coming to an age when their education became a perplexing question. The village where the Seminary had been established had been gradually stranded by the advances and changes of the times. The stage-coach that ran twice a day in 1834, and made the Hill sufficiently accessible, in 1850 seemed lumbering and antiquated. The new railroads just missed the town; schools grew poorer rather than better. The devices of governesses and home education, by which the parents had so far contrived to shield the children from the defective public schools, were growing insufficient. The way to long training in distant academies was not clear. Just then the Trustees of the Seminary decided on establishing a classical academy in the place, thinking it would somehow prove a valuable auxiliary to the institution. For the ten years that

it survived, the school was of a high order. The course was thorough, and the teachers persons who have won distinction in different departments since. President Chadbourne, now of Williams College, opened it, and was for some time its principal.

One of the great anxieties was relieved, and the father and mother took up their burdens with lighter hearts, and the glad thankfulness with which it had always been their habit to receive each event as coming directly from God's hand. The opening of the school brought a new care, as well as a new relief; the children of friends came to be in her family, while they were fitting for college, which meant that she was a mother to them all. Her warm sympathy and bright, cheerful spirit drew them to confide in her. Her laugh was so merry, they could not think she had forgotten what it was to be young; and her overflowing kindness, and sweet, tender pity, when they were sick or tired, or "needed brooding," as she used to say, drew them all to rest in her. There was no one of them all whom she did not try to win to a Christian manhood, as it was impossible for her not to try to do for every one she knew.

In 1865 a nephew wrote her: "I wish to learn more particularly of your dear household. It was a real home to me. It was more, my spiritual birthplace, and I shall never cease to recall with deep

emotion the scenes of '55. It would be delightful if we could turn the hands on the dial back, not to make it traverse these ten years again, but to enjoy for a day the reviving of some precious hours gone. I do not fancy you much changed, but that sorrow has done for you what it has done for us all. What a family of boys, besides your own, look back on your motherly care and affection,— the Cs., M., N., — you must feel *so old* when you think how many you have helped to train. Sometimes when I have been sitting a long while talking with chum, that is to say, looking into the open fire, I wish that I might exchange No. 21 for your sitting-room, and my dreamy companion for your own self. Do you ever sit up late nights now, to talk with naughty, but well-meaning boys?

"Believe that I am more than ever a son of your heart, which, though it sound sentimental to others, is real to me."

In 1879 the same nephew from Dresden wrote of her: "So blessed has been the life of her who has gone, so full of helpful sympathy, prayer, and work, that I find myself saying constantly, 'Heaven is the place for such as she.' I always felt warmly attached to Aunt Eliza, as all who came near her as I did, have; but she was so especially associated with the feeble beginnings of Christian hope, that this feeling

became more tender and sacred than it otherwise could have done. Her earnest love beamed through her wise counsel, illuminating it and making me in love with the truth which I had disliked and shunned. How well I remember her gentle pleading and charitable allowance for my weaknesses! The blessing she was to me in helping me to a surrender of the affections, and guarding me against the error of mere intellectual acceptance of the gospel, was the outcome of what she was, a loving Christian woman." Another nephew, touching on this same relation, writes: "Her loving heart and kindly deeds made her lovable, but it seems to me that there was besides some rarer gift which must have affected many besides myself. Her strength of character was of the kind which draws and not repels, and which makes those stronger who are reached by it. There was nothing which settled my feelings more, after hearing the conversation and arguments of an unbeliever, than a sight of Aunt Eliza's face and hearing her speak of the best things. There is no argument for the truth of Christianity like such a life."

A little essay written by her for a circle of ladies who met every fortnight for charitable work, and combined some literary exercises with it, is interesting, because so unconsciously reflecting herself.

WOMANLY CHARACTER.

In drawing a character as perfect as human nature will allow, two things are necessary: consistency with itself, and adaptation to the circumstances in which it is placed. The personal attractions of a female are, in themselves considered, of little consequence; they win the admiration of the beholder, but, if not connected with intelligence and amiability, they soon pall upon the taste and lose their power to charm.

In order to form a consistent character, we must begin with that purifying, life-giving principle which alone is the foundation of all true excellence, namely, pure religion. There may be, and often is, intellectual greatness without this, but, where the cultivation of the heart is neglected, the character must be incomplete. The human heart is naturally devoted to its own interests, and if there is no counteracting principle the character will become selfish; and there is no principle sufficiently powerful to stem the current of the soul but religion, which manifests itself in humility, self-denial, and love to the whole human family. The individual we are attempting to describe would constantly watch over her own heart, would suppress every unkind and selfish feeling, would often compare herself with the perfect standard of duty, and, while conscious of her own imperfections, she would bear with patience the frailties of those around her, or, in the words of inspiration, she would possess the "charity which *seeketh not her own*, thinketh no evil, hopeth all things, believeth all things, rejoiceth in the truth." In one word, she does to others as she would have others do to her. But if she thus assiduously cultivates her heart, she does not neglect her understanding; she considers it a talent committed

to her, for which she must give account, — consequently she improves her mind, not that she may obtain a reputation, but that she may better discharge the duties of her station. True female delicacy shrinks from notoriety.

While she is thus rendering herself an ornament to her sex and a blessing to society, she claims no praise for herself, but ascribes it to that spirit imparted to her by Him who became poor that she might be rich, and laid down his life that she might never die.

Her affections are not supremely attached to the objects of this world, but she looks beyond the grave to those joys which eye hath not seen nor the heart of man conceived. While she is happy in the performance of duty here, she looks forward with delight to the time when she shall refresh her soul from the river of life, in the presence of her Redeemer. A character like this is adapted to a world of disappointment and sorrow. Her treasure on high and her heart there also, she enjoys prosperity with moderation, and in affliction she is strengthened by knowing that all things work together for her good. She seeks instruction from every dispensation of Providence, and thus her soul gains purity and is preparing for the society of the blest spirits in another world.

May this character be ours!

By her strong grasp of certain principles of living and her sincerity in acting upon them, she solved practically more than one problem on which volumes have been written to no great purpose.

The problem of domestic service was perplexing to her as to all American housekeepers, but she met it with patience and courage. From the first she

treated her domestics with consideration and kindness. In the very early years of her housekeeping the question "What shall we do with our kitchens?" presented itself in a rather startling way. The incumbent was a young woman who had never seemed very strong, but showed nothing unusual in any way, until one morning the mistress appeared at the usual time, to find the fire unmade and no signs of Amanda. She hastily called her, while she herself prepared breakfast, expecting the girl's step on the stair every moment. At last she went to her room and found her still asleep. No effort to arouse her had any effect, the stupor was so absolute. She went down to care for the family, puzzled, but supposing she would wake of herself soon. The girl did not appear until nearly noon, mortified and unable to explain the cause of the prolonged sleep. After that she would frequently fall into the same state in the daytime, and while in it could do what was impossible when in her ordinary condition. Her eyes would remain tightly closed, and while so she could read fluently, when at other times she blundered and stumbled and could scarcely get through a simple verse.

Other persons became interested in the case, and on one occasion Dr. Tyler came in, and himself tied his large red-silk handkerchief, thickly folded, over her eyes, while they were tightly closed; then, holding a

Bible before her upside down, opened to an unfamiliar passage in the Old Testament and asked her to read, which she did correctly, and equally well when it was held behind her.

It was more interesting scientifically than practically; but the mistress pitied the maid, connected as the phenomenon was with failing health, and bore with the inconvenience for months, until at last relatives were found to care for her. Whoever she employed soon felt her to be a friend. She inquired into the condition of their clothing, and, usually finding them poorly provided for, helped them plan, often cutting out garments with her own hands, overwhelmed with cares as she was, not resting till they were comfortable.

One Bridget, celebrated in the family annals for uncommon impertinence and unskilfulness, was the trial of her soul for eleven years. Having decided that she was as competent as any one that could be obtained, she concluded to bear what could not be cured; endured her unreasonableness, advised and taught her as far as possible, insisting on her laying by part of her wages every month, and then, when her uncommon wealth began to attract lovers whom her personal charms would hardly have won, my mother spent many an hour in counteracting the wooing of young men who drank and would have

made poor Bridget miserable. We used to think it a rather wasted effort then, not seeing how ideally beautiful and right it all was, and how she had struck the key in which it is now found all real labor-reform must be set, before employers and employed can be harmonious. By self-sacrifice and kindness she saved the ignorant creature as far as lay in her power, and was really in the end better served than those who take fire at each provocation and think of the employed only as troublesome parts of the machinery.

Her spirit of helpfulness was well illustrated by her course in regard to singing. She was thirty eight or nine years old, and had never been trained in music, when a movement was made to organize a chorus choir for the Seminary chapel. It was urged that every one who ever sang at all should unite, and help as far as possible. That, she thought, included her, and, knowing very well how small a musical talent she had, she attended the training-school regularly, joined the choir, and sang so evidently with the spirit that no one could suspect her of an exaggerated idea of her own gifts.

New tests of character and strains on faith and feeling were constantly coming in these busy years. The boys and girls, who were babies only the other day, were grown and ready for college and boarding-school. Any change that took one of her children

from her immediate care was to her a great one. It was with prayers and tears she parted from her sons one after the other. "I shall never forget," she wrote once to the oldest, "how I felt when you first put on boy's clothes. It was the beginning of your growing up." This was another step. But with what letters she followed them, what boxes at Thanksgiving, if they could not come home, what welcomes for vacations!

It would be as easy to analyze the flowers in one's wedding bouquet as to tell precisely what she did and said that made her such a mother. In her excellent judgment there was a sense of strength and wisdom to guide, and her deep, warm love was an unfailing refuge. One says "Mother," and stops as we say "God," not able to explain, but aware of Him under and around and everywhere.

One of the pleasant occasions, after cares began to lessen a little, and there was time for backward glances, was the silver wedding, which was celebrated by a family gathering in the fall of 1859. At that time she wrote the following letter to her children: —

My beloved Children, — Yesterday was the anniversary of the day when we were planted among the families of the earth, and, as it also completes the first quarter of a century, it seems desirable to record the dealings of God with us as a family.

One of the first resolutions formed after my face was turned Zionward was, never to allow myself to become interested in any one not a Christian, or to whom I could not look up with respect. That, under existing circumstances, was nearly equivalent to a resolution to live a single life. When our union was formed, the prospect as regarded worldly matters, was one of privation and self-denial; a friend, on hearing the amount of salary expected, said to me, "That would not buy my pins." "I know it," I replied; "but it will probably support me." We took this word for our heritage, "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." God has made good his promise. As a family, we have never wanted any good thing. We have always had enough for ourselves and a morsel for those that were needy. In that dark hour when death seemed standing just outside the door, and I was forced to look widowhood, orphanage, and poverty in the face, this covenant promise of a covenant-keeping God was a strong tower; by grace I ran into it, and was safe. It did not include the luxuries of life, — things, in our view, inconsistent with the self-denying spirit of pilgrims and strangers, — and therefore we adopted as plain and simple a style of living as was consistent with health and respectability. You can testify that I have not spared myself when personal effort was needed. Amid all the trials and vicissitudes of family life, never, *for one moment*, have I regretted the step taken, neither have I found uncalled for the sober views with which we took it. With me it was second only to consecration to the service of Christ. God only knows the number and the strength of the trials and temptations which awaited us, but out of them all he hath delivered us, and made us thankfully acknowledge that they were the needed discipline.

Time has not weakened our mutual attachment: it is stronger and more perfect to-day than at any former period.

We received you as precious gifts from our Heavenly Father, intrusted to our care, — not wholly ours, but to be trained for his service and subject to his call. We felt his command imperative to bring you up in his fear and teach you his precepts. You are consecrated to his service; the world has no claim upon you. You understand in what sense I use that term "the world." In another sense it has the strongest claim. It demands that your influence shall be like salt thrown into the turbid waters, purifying and sanctifying. It has been my desire to train you to feel that there is no object worth living for but the glory of God and the good of others.

This has not presented itself to me in the light of a self-denying duty, but as a high privilege; and if Christ should condescend to use you in his service I would say: "It is enough; now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

From this standpoint I look back upon so many mistakes of judgment, so many imperfections and shortcomings, such weakness of faith, such risings of rebellion, such ebullitions of selfishness and pride in my heart and life, that I am constrained to say, if there is any good thing in any of us, it is all of sovereign grace. God has taught us that the power to control human spirits is peculiarly his own. Often when my purposes in this respect were crossed, and I have been driven in despair to seek the aid of Almighty power, he has appeared for my help and wrought deliverance. Let us recall the mercy of the Lord in healing our sicknesses, in preserving our going out and our coming in, and that there is no dishonored name in our household.

Take courage for the future, review your principles and motives, and renew your consecration to Christ. Let no inducement of present comfort or worldly gain turn you aside from the position of greatest usefulness.

Watch jealously the golden chain of fraternal love. Cheerfully make any personal sacrifice rather than suffer it to be tarnished. I have no fear that your filial love will fail. The history of the next twenty-five years is in the mind of our glorious Head. Let us commit ourselves to Him, in the sure and certain hope that all will be well.

YOUR LOVING MOTHER.

These words of trust had not been many years written when the storm of war burst over the country, convulsing, shattering, sweeping away so much. Like all true women of that time, my mother threw her intense feeling into the form of active service, — a leader in her own circle in the movement for sending hospital supplies and comforts to the soldiers on the field. She would turn, with the tears still wet on her cheeks from reading the accounts of battles, to cut out havelocks and sew bandages. But it was to come nearer. In August, 1862, her youngest son, Samuel, enlisted. He had finished his studies at Phillips Academy in July, and was about to enter Yale. He was only nineteen, just in the beauty of his youth and the opening of a manhood that promised all which a mother's heart dreams.

It was such a knightly act as his whole training and

her own spirit had helped prepare him for. When the grave words, "I think I *ought* to go," fell from his lips, that had grown ten years older that summer, she could not oppose him, but the quietness came that always fell on her when the depths were stirred. She worked and smiled, but said little. "To suffer and be strong" was the part of women in those terrible days.

Her face grew white as the time came nearer when he must go, but she mostly hid her tears, turning her sweet face, a centre of calm, on the surging sea of family excitement around her. In her heart hope was strong that he might come back, not knowing that his clear eyes saw through to the end. "I knew how it would be when I enlisted," he told her when he lay dying.

It was soon all over. A few weeks' marching and bivouacking, hunger and thirst and the scorching southern sun, did their work on his frame, nobly moulded, but too finely organized to bear such strains. There was the one awful day of Antietam, one flashing out of the pent-up passion and fire of which heroes are made, — a story to tell to children's children, of how he sprang to his dead captain's place, shouting, "Form on me, boys, form on me!" leading his men and rallying the scattered regiment; how, in the horror of the confused rout, he helped a wounded

comrade from the field, crossing and recrossing the bridge in the full face of the enemy's fire, yet carrying still his overcoat cape on his arm, that the women who loved him might be spared every pang that he could spare them; how, when night fell, he dragged himself fainting to the woods, able to do no more than remember to draw that covering over him, while the darkness closed in and the rain fell, and for him the short, sharp battle of life was done.

Six weeks from the day that he marched down the Hartford street with the Sixteenth on their way to Virginia, he lay wrapped in the flag, under his laurel crown, with the white lily on his breast, in the home whose light and pride he had been.

Almost his last words were to his mother, as she bent over him, trying to soothe his mortal weariness. "Kiss me, mother: I am going before long." "I shall follow you soon, my son," said she, as if from a heart breaking with an anguish it could not bear.

That was the going down of the sun (to more than one life), the beginning of ever-lengthening shadows. The mother bore the great shock bravely, but, always after, her heart was divided. While she clung no less to those who stayed, she was always longing to go to him who would not return to her.

"I was surprised," said a friend who spoke to her of him sixteen years after he went, "to see the tears spring

to her eyes, so that she could hardly speak. Her ordinary cheerful manner had not prepared me for this." The fruits of her sorrow were "peaceable," but the absent was unforgotten.

Not long after Samuel's death, her oldest son, Charles, went abroad to study the German methods in schools of technology, preparatory to assuming the charge of the one about to be established in Worcester, Mass. She was thoroughly interested in his object, but her wound was still too fresh for her to think, without the most tremulous yearning, of the risks of travel and distance. It was one more added to those experiences of watching, waiting, and prayer without ceasing, that make up the mother's life.

One by one, the children married. She received each new son and daughter, as they came into the family, with a warm affection that never ceased to bless them with the belief that they were really taken into her heart and held as her own.

In the fall of 1869 the wedding of the youngest daughter gathered friends and kin together for the last time under the roof of the Windsor home. It was not without significance that when the rooms were dressed that last time with wreaths and branches for the festival, it was under an arch of bittersweet that all passed outward. There had been laughter and tears, fear and hope, in the home which the two

who loved God and each other had begun thirty years before. The young girl who had come with that serious sweetness in her eyes, confiding and courageous, had ripened, through sunshine and shower, into the matron whose presence there and everywhere was a benediction. She had been strong as a wife to share a difficult lot, and to the children so wise and tender and true that the halo which crowns unselfish lives was visibly surrounding her. There was no unmingled bitterness in the pathos of the last song, the wedding-song that closed the drama lived out in that house. Its varying harmonies had constantly returned to the chord of faith on which they were built up. She had so steadily looked at the things which are unseen, she could not be shaken beyond recovery by any change that touched only the external.

The Seminary had been removed three years before to Hartford, and now there seemed no reason for any longer retaining the house at Windsor, even for a summer home. Only women tenacious of local associations, who know what it is to weave their very heart-life into the homes in which they come as brides, where their children have been born and reared, where they have watched over their sick and buried their dead, can understand what it cost her, at her age, to break those ties. She shrank from it,

and for a while opposed it, but, convinced that it was best, she conquered herself once more, and with a composure marvellous to those who knew what she felt, she yielded and prepared for the breaking up.

In two weeks from the wedding-day the house was empty. Many of the bulbs and flowers she had loved so much she scattered among her friends and children, and the sweetest lilies and roses in gardens widely separated to-day are reminders of her.

"There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember; and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts."

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVENING TIME.

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"What still is left of strength employ
This end to help attain,
One common wave of thought and joy
Lifting mankind again."

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord
when he cometh shall find so doing."

THERE is no closer test of character than what one chooses to do when he is free to choose.

Many women coming out of a somewhat aimless girlhood into matronly cares drift into a generally right course. The very stress of circumstance forces them into a kind of faithfulness to duty. Natural instinct and ordinary conscience dictate a degree of devotion to those most nearly dependent on them for happiness. When the children are grown and the pressure lifted, a certain propriety in caps, and a judicious vibration between knitting, crocheting, and the Kensington stitch in buttercups, are felt to be all the world has a right to demand of them. Occasional

mild concessions to the urgencies of charitable collectors, or the rare sending around of the carriage to take church invalids to ride, leaves in their minds a savor of unusual rectitude, as of voluntary service on the part of discharged soldiers.

With Mrs. Thompson, life at twenty had individual purpose and genuine consecration. The lesson of the last fourteen years is only that she

> "Obeyed the voice at eve
> She had obeyed at prime."

The era of household care was past. In the hotel and boarding-house her time was her own, but as a neighbor remarked, "There was not a busier woman in Hartford than Mrs. Thompson."

It had never been her way to endure life, but to conquer it by her faith in special Providence, and her whole-souled choice to serve rather than be served. It was so, still.

The round of action in the restricted circle of home, exacting and intense as it had been, had not narrowed her sympathies. In her busiest days she had still thought; she had observed and reflected. In her love for her own she had not absorbed all her capacity for loving. As the history of families and individuals had passed before her, it had been more than food for passing remark. She had traced results back to causes, effects to governing principles;

so that it was not only with ripened experience, but intelligent moral convictions and unwithered ardor, that she came to "Life's late afternoon."

She was scarcely established in Hartford before she was known as one whose advice as well as labor was of value in the different departments of church work. It was not that ease had no charm for her, but usefulness had more. She rose above the lesser into the greater good.

By some mysterious magnetism the poor and she came into communication. Rickety attic-stairs which she could justly have excused herself from climbing on account of her increasing stoutness and the weakness of her ankles, knew her step well.

She abhorred waste, and in the breaking up of the old home she had saved material which could be made into useful garments, but which, given away as it was, would be of little value, it not being probable that poor women would have either time or skill to expend in that way. There was the very soul of Christianity in the way those buttonholes on the little children's quilts were worked, when they had been warmly wadded, the mist gathering in her kind eyes while she said to herself, there would be at least two or three little girls who would not be very cold that winter. There was a thoroughness in her way of doing good that marked it as springing

from a source quite different from that which prompts the careless turning over of superfluities to the poor, with a vague belief that even that ought to be set down as very much to one's credit. With the great ocean of suffering and want around us, she felt that the least a Christian woman could do was to give not only things but herself. Doing the most possible, she felt to be only following afar off in the steps of our Master. Into the organization of the Woman's Christian Association she threw herself heartily. One of their first efforts was the building of the Church Street Home for Working-Girls. She worked untiringly as a manager, and in the superintendence of the means for religious culture, thoroughly believing that the deepest sources of happiness lie in faith and the acquaintance of the soul with Jesus Christ, and that only half the work of kindness is done when physical wants are met. She knew too well what a woman's life is, to suppose it can be fed by bread alone.

She was zealous in making pretty articles for the fairs held to free the Home from debt. When she was taking her summer rest by the sea-shore or among the mountains, a bit of embroidery designed for the winter sale would be in progress at odd moments, or arrangements of shells and mosses for the same purpose. When her eyes were too tired

for either, there was knitting; for there would surely be a demand at the sale-tables for her children's mittens. Meanwhile nothing beautiful on sea or shore escaped her eye, and nothing rare or interesting as a specimen. A lace cap she held as a necessary inconvenience; a bit of sea-corn was a treasure. Her love of shells amounted to a passion, if any thing amounted to that in her well-balanced, even nature. She delighted in collecting them and in every thing concerning their history, imparting her own enthusiasm to her grandchildren, who were never tired of seeing her press the mosses, and of helping her collect all the odd things the sea tossed up. They found the greatest pleasure in their bathing and their swimming-lesson, if grandma were in the company, for no one else was quite so merry, or entered into it all with such a zest.

Indeed, her relation to her grandchildren was so beautiful as to quite give the lie to the writers who tell us we must go to French chateaux or English homes to find specimens of the real grandmothers, who used to form so lovely a part of the family picture.

She took each one into her heart as they came to the different homes. She overflowed with anxious sympathies for every ailment of their infancy, shaping the little socks for their feet with the same care and

interest with which she wrote quarterly reports or prepared addresses for benevolent societies. She lingered over the bits of white and blue with the fond smile of her own young motherhood, and recalled the old skill in embroidery when she was past sixty, that what she had wrought might be among the first dresses worn by a grandchild.

Her life must have been a puzzle to the persons who cannot conceive of woman's activity in organized form, the conservatism of her immense reserved force of sympathy and wisdom, without some sad sacrifice of the more primal and intimate ties that depend on womanly tenderness.

She had too ample a nature and too genuine, ever to dream that any thing can be more important than what concerns the comfort and good of children. She felt a certain fine indignation toward the very hint in theory or practice. Had her instinct not sufficed, she was able, by one or two direct strokes of her sound sense, to cut a knot that needed no unravelling. Her arguments on points in regard to which she was fully informed were apt to be conclusive.

The most irritable egotist, intent on asserting the comparative expanse of his own nature by curtailing the possible stretch of others, would have felt no alarm as to the traditional feminine traits of this

woman, if he had seen her, the fair face tinged with the pink color that had never forgotten how to come and go, surrounded by her group of grandchildren. They clung to her, confiding their little plans and thoughts, as sure of her sympathy as of the package of stockings and mittens that came every Christmas, knit by her own hand.

One of her last visits she made at Worcester, the home of her oldest son; the children first spied the carriage that brought her, and before the parents knew what was in progress, she had been triumphantly seized and conducted to the playroom in the third story, where she was shortly after found, with hat and travelling wraps still on, listening, all smiles and attention, to the boys' eager explanations of their minerals and shells.

Under all, there was her characteristic earnestness and deep conviction of what was more than passing joy. She studied the characteristics of each one, trying to strengthen them where they were weak, and fix the awful *must* of duty below the tides of feeling. "I want to get a hold upon them," she used to say; "then what I say will have some influence." The precepts of a grandmother who made them shell necklaces, cared about all their games, and had such kisses for them all, sank into their very souls.

Whatever happened in the four homes of her children, — at Worcester, Reading, Fitchburg, or Middletown, — to write to mother about it was the first impulse. Whether it was joy or sorrow, they were sure of her sympathy, and in perplexity her advice was felt to be a light. When nothing happened they knew that simply to be informed of the daily current of their lives was part of her happiness, and when mother's prayers could be enlisted in behalf of any individual or object for which they were working, they knew the strongest available force had been brought into play. Her visits were a west-wind of cheerfulness blowing over weariness and care. Every thing felt steadier, simpler, and surer when she was in the house. Tangles began to clear up. Whether it was the fresh thought she brought down-stairs from her morning Bible reading, — a tonic for the spiritual life of the day, — or the thimble and scissors that in spite of all protests insisted on being felt where they were needed, or the little package of flower-seeds for the garden, or the receipt for pickles produced from the portfolio where it was lying in peaceful proximity to the memoranda of the Constantinople Home, or whether it was the sight of the lovely face asleep in the arm-chair after dinner, — altogether, sunshine came with her. It could not seem an unmixed misfortune to be born into the world where she was.

As always, the circle of blessing spread out from the single home, and her children's friends came to value acquaintance with the mother as something to be treasured.

A lady who knew her in this way writes: "Your mother's sweet voice and manners drew me to her, and it was easy to talk freely with her of precious interests. I was made better by knowing her. She did good in such a simple, genuine way, no one could know her without being stimulated to a broader life."

After the civil war was ended, and the great question of African slavery settled in this country, there were prophetic souls who felt that the next problem that would occupy us and be slowly solved, was that of the training and the sphere of women. Events have proved that they were right. The vastness and the complications of the problem have become more manifest with each new theory and test, until the wisest admit it to be capable of solution only by experiment. Happily, in our free atmosphere and in our general system, itself an experiment, this is possible. Looking back seventeen years, the least sanguine progress that inspires fresh patience; the improvement in physical training, already visibly telling in larger cities; the hundred new avenues of industry for women where there

was one then; Vassar and Smith and Wellesley where then there was only the unctuous speculator of the boarding-school; the unnumbered societies for self-improvement where the best women of communities gather to study and consider questions in social science, as well in Kansas and Illinois as in New York and Massachusetts, — all these tangible proofs of advance, and others, in spite of what is undone, it seems, might stir the silent sleeper in the Haworth churchyard with a thrill of joy, or her whose grave in Florence is to many a pilgrim one of its holiest shrines. Truth and time are strong enough to outwear all prisons.

The new structure of womanly life was to be like the universal Church, "fitly framed together by that which every joint supplieth." Each need not comprehend the whole. Each may dream that his own little arch spans the building, but as many as follow where they are led by the Spirit, must surely find their work at last built into the great cathedral existing in completeness now only in the mind of God.

To the majority of refined and conservative women, the first strokes on this new building sounded as those that form a log hut, a barbaric framework, with which they scorned to have any thing to do; but before they were aware, and not knowing what

they did, the spreading, subtle impulse drew them on, and women in the churches, to whom responsibility and opportunity were one, began to ask themselves if there was no more which they could do for women in heathen countries than to read the "Missionary Herald," and favor the regular contributions of their husbands to the Missionary Boards. The spirit which moved Mehetible Kneeland sixty-seven years before, when she went to her room to write "One cent where millions are needed," revived again in Boston, as all good spirits, however hindered, do revive, and in 1869 a new Woman's Board of Foreign Missions was organized.

The movement slowly spread throughout New England and the West, not without persistent labor on the part of the earnest spirits inspired to push it on. One of those spirits Mrs. Thompson was. She added devotion to this work to her activity in other directions, and was made president of the Hartford Branch of the society. Her official duties embraced not only care of the regular meetings, of subscriptions in Hartford, the attendance on the annual meeting in Boston, but the organization of auxiliary societies through the county, correspondence with missionaries, and all those incidental cares which fall to one known to be interested in such an object.

If any one had said to my mother in 1865 that she would ever address public meetings, or preside over large bodies assembled to deliberate on any subject, she would have needed no further proof of his insanity. She had never been able to summon courage to announce in her own parlor, that the next meeting of the sewing-society would be held at Mrs. John Smith's, but, after fruitless efforts to raise her voice sufficiently, had always ended in going privately to each lady in the room to mention the appointment.

That, at her age, powers so absolutely dormant should suddenly develop, was a study of great interest to her friends. Some one has said that any woman who could rule a household well could manage a kingdom. In her case, experience in care-taking, with her clear, composed, definite habit of mind, was found to adapt her unusually to the duties of a presiding officer, while her ardent piety diffused itself like leaven through the assembly. "I could always feel," said one, "when Mrs. Thompson led in prayer, that the spiritual plane of a meeting was raised." Once having conquered her shrinking, she found her voice could be distinctly heard in any part of any room where she tried to use it. Pushed on, step by step, by the pressure of evident duty, she found herself praying and speaking in crowded

churches, with as much ease as she felt in gliding through the ball-room in the days of her girlhood. "If she had not spoken," some one said, "it would have been a blessing to have her lovely face to look at as she sat on the platform;" but when she rose, with the dignity that comes from self-forgetfulness and absorption in a great thought, to plead the cause of suffering women in Turkey, or India, grounding every appeal on some solid principle, there was felt to be in her, force as well as sweetness. That unusual knowledge of the Bible which she had gained by life-long study, was singularly telling. It had a sort of vitality, tested as it had been by the successive steps of her practical life, seeming from her lips something tangible, as a ship's compass or a harbor light. To an age in whose vacillations and perplexities of religious thought it was not her part to share, she offered that most precious of all helps, the solid fact of a genuine Christlike life, consciously built up on confidence in Him.

It was said by one who met her only at these missionary meetings, "There was a motherliness about her; you felt you could give her your confidence, and it would not be misplaced;" and it was not uncommon for one to whisper to another as she passed up the aisle, "If there was ever a good woman it is she." After her work was done, one who had worked

with her wrote: "She was a tower of strength, both in the Branch of which she was president, and in the Board at Boston. She was wise and judicious in counsel, true in friendship, equal to an emergency, and breathing so naturally the spirit of prayer that she carried all hearts with her very near the throne. There was a warm-hearted sincerity in her that made friends of all. Who that attended the meeting of the American Board in Hartford can forget her warm welcome, her large hospitality? Yet she found the time amid all her cares to do helpful things for others."

In the establishment of the school for girls at Constantinople she felt an intense interest, and raised large sums for it by the most untiring personal effort. It is perhaps the most definite memorial of her missionary work. In one of its rooms her picture hangs, and a missionary teacher writes of the girls going up to it and saying, "To look at her helps me to be good." In correspondence with Miss Starkweather, Miss Strong, and other missionaries sent out by the Woman's Board, she opened the treasures of her Christian experience and made her own strength a strength to them. In the "Life and Light" for February, 1879, a letter from Miss Strong, missionary in Mexico, records an incident, — one probably of many that are unrecorded: —

"It was a time of great depression in the mission at M. Death had taken away some of the most efficient native helpers. At last one of the only two remaining missionaries was stricken down with the epidemic. The disease had spent its force, but it seemed doubtful whether the frail body would rally. How desolate and afflicted we were within those lonely walls! The days passed wearily on in my weakness in an upper room, for I too was prostrated, under the care of a native woman and her daughter. Well I remember the sad days, the intense anxiety that the missionary whose burdens had been so heavy in the burial of the dead and the relief of the sick, when outside help and sympathy from the foreigners were repelled because of contagion, might be spared, and the little band of praying ones might not be bereft of their teacher.

"As I lay on my couch, growing feverish and restless over my perplexing thoughts, suddenly a strange calm came over me. I felt as if I were a little child again, and had been soothed and hushed to rest in my mother's arms. Just then my friend came in to inquire how I was, fearing to hear the same sad answer heard so often before. But to-day I said joyfully, 'I am better, decidedly better! I think I shall get well. The strangest feeling has come over me the last hour, as if I had new life. I don't understand

it,' and soon added, 'I believe I know what it is. I am sure some one is praying for me. I think I will try to prove it. I asked my nurse to bring me my 'Daily Food,' and, turning to the day of the month, I marked it, saying to myself, 'I may hear about this day in another place.' From that hour, inspired by new courage, I began to recover, and was soon able to resume my duties. Weeks passed by, and I had almost forgotten the incident, when one day I received a letter from a friend, in which was the following sentence: 'In January I attended the meeting of the Woman's Board in Pilgrim Hall, Boston, and I wish you could have heard the earnest prayers offered for you, especially by Mrs. Thompson, President of the Hartford Branch.' I compared the date with the one in my 'Daily Food,' and the coincidence was complete."

Among my mother's papers there is an essay on the history of missions in India, closing thus: "The question is asked, Why were women sent at this juncture? Simply because the work could not be done without them. They were not only ready to go, but cheerfully laid themselves on the altar, and never regretted the sacrifice. What would the Pilgrim fathers have been without the Pilgrim mothers? Their patient endurance, their unwavering faith, sustained the courage of the men, who emulated their

bravery. Woman was made a helpmeet for man. Death is ever busy thinning the ranks of missionary workers, but the reserves come promptly forward to fill the gaps. Many of us may live to see the day when India shall be a Christian nation, shedding light on that dark continent. When China and Japan fall into line, then will be our time to sing our hallelujah. Shall we not vie with each other in obeying the dying command of our Lord, and in blessing others, receive a rich reward ourselves? This is God's way. 'The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends.'"

She felt strongly in regard to the harmony between home and foreign missionary work. Practically, in going through the county to establish foreign missionary societies, she found that the women most ready to enter into the work were those already most engaged in caring for our own frontier. At the last meeting she attended, in January, 1879, and in her last public address, she spoke on this subject, saying there was no conflict between the two, and, while upholding enthusiastically the home work, insisted that more intelligent knowledge of the foreign field was the great thing needed, and that our work abroad must not be left to suffer.

No woman in Hartford was more untiring in the preparation of home-missionary boxes, or more quick

to respond to special calls from the West for help, or to spend long afternoons in the extra service of sewing and arranging, that comes to a few after such boxes are nearly ready. One who was associated with her in these ways said, when she had gone, "We so enjoyed those afternoons. We shall miss Mrs. Thompson's laugh as much as her prayers;" and another, who was of a despondent, questioning turn, said, "How shall we live without her? She had the most childlike soul I ever knew."

One more great sorrow was to fall before the time of her own release. In 1868, just after the ordination of her second son, William, my mother had written as follows in "The Waif," a family letter which circulated weekly among her children: "September will henceforth be to us the beginning of months. Perhaps no one of the events that mark that period [referring to its being the month of her own and her two daughters' wedding-days, of the birthday of the oldest son, and of the fatal battle of Antietam], is of more vital importance than the one just passed, the setting apart of the son and brother to be an ambassador of Christ. The mother's thoughts reverted to the days of childhood, the early consecration, that terrible illness and reprieve from death, the alternate hopes and fears, through early youth the constant effort to train you to the service of

Christ, his gracious acceptance, sealed at last, as it seemed to me, by that solemn service."

She had a peculiar satisfaction in his work as well as in his character. From his boyhood he had been one concerning whom friends involuntarily said, "Blessed are the pure in heart," — a thoroughly true, chivalrous, noble soul; but, with much good work done, and more just opening before him, he fell suddenly ill on his return from a summer vacation, and died on the 17th of September, 1876, at his home in Reading, Mass.

She had known once before the withering of hopes, the sudden going down of the sun before the morning dew was dry; but this blighting of promise fell with a heavy chill. It was not only all she hoped to see him accomplish that had faded away, but, as they felt themselves turning to go down the slope, the parents found their hearts more and more leaning on him. He had the steadfast, unfailing considerateness, united with his sterling qualities, to make him a son to comfort one's old age.

She was with him to the last, catching his dying words of assured faith and his heavenly smile, as he had glimpses of what was just before. "My precious mother," she would hear him whisper, as his eye followed her here and there in the room. A few days after he went, one of the family said, smiling

through her tears, "Mother, there will never be a time for you to go. We cannot live without you, and we certainly cannot die without you." But another said when she had gone out, seeing how she shook under this last blow, "I hope she need not have this to go through again. I hope no more of us will be taken till she is at rest," and that prayer was heard.

She did not allow her grief to hinder her entering with a peaceful delight into a long-anticipated festival, the celebration on the 17th of the following February, of her husband's seventieth birthday. The gathering, an entire surprise to him, was held at the home of his only remaining brother, Dr. Augustus C. Thompson, of Boston Highlands. He had been one of the happy group who welcomed the same brother when he brought his young wife home to them forty years before, and had been much in the home by the Seminary in those days, marrying Elizabeth Strong, Eliza Butler's old Northampton friend, whom he now brought for a while to Windsor. The gathering was full of memories as well as of rejoicing. One of these two sisters, of whom my mother had written long ago, "The tie of blood could not have made them nearer," had married Eleazar Lord, a merchant of New York. Her beautiful home on the Hudson became associated, as time

went on, with some of the choicest hours of rest and refreshment in my mother's busy years. Watching the white sails go by on the Tappan Zee, strolling in the cedar groves, gathering bittersweet, and breathing in all the exquisite charm of that landscape, she took breath there for fresh toil. With equal readiness she had responded to the summons that called her to the same home in times of sickness and sorrow, smoothing the dying pillow of the niece to whom in her school-days she had rejoiced to give a mother's care; sharing the anxiety that came with Mr. Lord's slow decline and death, and at last, in the closing scene, when the sister went through a baptism of fire to rejoin the husband and child. All these sorrowful changes, as well as those in her own home, and the others of the group, became vivid when the kindred that remained gathered to wish joy to the one who had come to seventy years. Yet it was a happy day. To see him she loved best surrounded by loving appreciation, was enough to call out her sweetest smile of content.

That company had hardly scattered before the sudden removal of her daughter Elizabeth to Kansas was a fresh strain on her love and faith. While Mr. Spring's pastorate was in Fitchburg, that home, like the others, was within a few hours' journey of Hartford, but Kansas seemed far away. The separation

was peculiarly trying, coming to her while the wound of William's death was still fresh, and those that remained instinctively clung closer together. They all knew well that the change meant not only more infrequent visits, but a numbing sense of distance in case of sudden illness, or the coming again of that messenger whose summons had twice broken the circle. Considerations of health and other indications made the path so plain that there was nothing but to follow where Providence led, and those who went took with them the blessing of her cheerful, trustful acquiescence.

During this year she wrote to her son Charles in regard to some changes in the family connection: —

"So the history of families closes up. One generation goeth and another cometh. Shall we not live more as seeing the invisible? While performing the duties and enjoying the blessings of this life, shall not its hold be light upon us, and our position that of listening for the boatman's oar to take us to the other side? The attractions over there are growing stronger and stronger, and its rest and blessedness more and more alluring. As I write, how many thoughts come trooping through my brain, thoughts of love and loving trust! You were always inexpressibly dear to me, but now there is a peculiar tenderness mingled with the love, a sense

of preciousness, as you stand before me, the only one left of 'the three beautiful lads.' May the Lord spare you till after our work is done, and may we all go up to receive the crown with as firm a trust and as clear a title as those who are already there!

"A number of very sudden deaths lately make us feel that we are sure of nothing here, and invariably I have a throb of grateful relief when I hear your father's step on the stair.

"I quoted that remark about sending so much money out of the country for missions, at our meeting last week, and made some comments upon it. The command embraces *all nations*. The condition of our sex, for whom we especially labor in unchristian lands, is wretched, so far below any thing possible in this country, that the call is imperative to apply the only remedy, the gospel of the Lord Jesus. Think of Christian churches and Christian families standing as so many beacon-lights in the terrible darkness. The five loaves and two small fishes are being fed to the multitudes, and by and by we will bring back the twelve baskets full to bless our own dark places. More ought to be done for both home and foreign work, and they react upon each other."

In September, 1878, she writes to the same son: —

"How strange it seems that it will be forty-four years to-morrow that your father and I have walked

side by side! How different every thing seems from what it did that bright, beautiful morning, when we went forth, hand in hand, from the parental roof, so unconscious of what we were actually doing. We have known joy and sorrow, smiles and tears, but the result is all that could be desired. We have grown into each other, and the union was never more perfect than to-day. Can it be that it is forty-two years since I received you, a helpless infant, to my loving care? I can truly say that you have been a joy and comfort to me ever since, not wholly unmixed, it is true, like every thing earthly, with anxious care, but the blessed Master has borne that for me, and given me loving-kindness and tender mercy. My prayer is that in coming years your children may give you occasion to say as much.

"In my dealings with the great Intercessor I have held on to you and yours, and in the covenant of his love I think he has held on to me and granted my requests. He has taught me what I could and what I *could not* do, and when I laid the latter unto him, he did it in his own time and way. I am coming to feel it is to him I am to carry all my anxieties for your children's highest interests. They are the children of the covenant, and many prayers are registered for them on high. The boys were so affectionate during my last visit it did my heart good.

I feel I have a hold upon them which may tell for their benefit in future years, when I am gone beyond their sight. How soon that time may come, who can tell? They may go before me and leave me like a shattered trunk. 'As He will.' The things of time seem more and more unimportant. The certainties of the coming eternity are the only realities. I am reading John's Gospel, and was never more impressed with the infinite tenderness of the great God, our Saviour. His justice and holiness stand out like the great rocks, but the mercy overflows them all."

Mrs. Thompson had felt it a very tender mercy that the home of her daughter Mary should be at Middletown, only an hour's ride from Hartford. Though she missed keenly the frequent sight of the daughter's face, one great pleasure of the last year of mother's life was in receiving her letters written during a tour in Europe. Those six months she was following the absent daughter everywhere and sharing all her experiences. While the party were in Scotland she wrote with great enthusiasm of her love for that country, and for the first time expressed the desire she had always had to visit it. It was a dream of youth that had survived all her years of care, kindling again just now when she was so near the life where the desires of the heart are granted.

Directly after Mary sailed, my mother went for a time to Falmouth, — the home of Mrs. Jenkins, her husband's only remaining sister, where for many years she had been in the habit of spending happy weeks. For the first time it was noticed she did not care for the sea-bathing that had always been a great delight to her. There were some other signs of diminished strength, but it was felt to be the most delightful of all the visits she had ever made. The sisters had long, inspiring conversations on subjects that lay nearest their hearts, while she was the very life of the picnics proposed by the younger members of the family party. As some one wrote of her, "Mrs. Thompson was never old." The earth was beautiful to her, and the innocent joy of the young, while she felt herself nearing a more unfettered and satisfying country.

From Falmouth, she went to Magnolia Beach, a region she had before greatly enjoyed, and returned in very good health to Hartford in September.

There she felt more than ever the distance of the daughter whom she had been used to feel so near. The time before the middle of November, when she was to return, seemed insupportably long. It had been her habit, if she could not reason herself into cheerfulness, to take some course that would induce it. Many a day, when, sitting in her room, loneliness

began to oppress her, and her heart began to sink, not with great sorrow, for which only God was her refuge, but with that indefinable depression which grand considerations do not touch, she would lay aside her sewing or reading, and go out to spend an hour with a friend. Happily she had one or two with fineness enough to perceive that it is often the bravest hearts and least complaining that most need comfort. Or she would decide that it was time to attend to the collection on some street, or consult in regard to the Church Street Home, or call on some one in sickness or sorrow. Any thing that savored of weakness, "parading one's own troubles," as she used to say, or letting a gloomy face implore sympathy, was her especial aversion. There were very few who penetrated the secret of her cheerfulness, or knew that the sunshine she carried with her was often won by courageous combat.

This autumn, it was her old habit of flanking the enemy she could not vanquish in any other way, that made her so ready to shorten the time of waiting by yielding to her brother Daniel's urgency to visit him in Green Bay, Wisconsin, in connection with the Foreign Missionary meeting at Milwaukee. Just entering her seventieth year, and unused to taking long journeys alone, she was half-startled by her own courage when she found herself fairly on the

way, but she said it seemed to her "Providence arranged every thing."

The home in Green Bay, where her brother had lived for forty years, she had never seen, and several members of the family. It was a great joy to her to renew the old ties as well as to take into her arms the brother's grandchildren. She entered warmly into the interests of each one, and left behind her a fresh spirit of hope and cheer in the household atmosphere.

The relatives in Chicago, with whom she spent a few days, retain similar impressions, her face and manner remaining as the memory of a lovely picture, seen there for the first and the last time. It was such a greeting and farewell as she would have chosen if she had known what lay beyond the next turn in her road, for she held that loving fellowship with God and with men, rather than secluded meditation on "our great and last change," is the best attitude in which to be found when the cry is made, "Go ye out to meet the Bridegroom."

From Green Bay she wrote to her daughter Mary: "The day of wonders has not ceased! I am actually here; 'Out West,' at Daniel's. Think of it a minute and take it in! Daniel wrote for your father and me to arrange for a visit in connection with the meeting of the Board. Father could n't come, and

of course I could n't come alone, and so settled the matter with a secret feeling that I wanted to come. D. was so disappointed, and urged it so strongly, that I concluded, as I lacked thirteen months of being seventy, I could go alone yet! I don't see that the West is particularly different from the East; the large corn-fields in place of our tobacco please me, but the rivers have no banks and the brooks are muddy canals. This journey answers one good purpose, *shortening the time.* You don't know how I miss you on going back to Hartford. I can't bear to stay there and know that neither of you is within call [referring to her daughter-in-law, Mrs. William Thompson, whose home was in Hartford, and who was now with friends in Europe].

"I am rather ashamed, but it is a new revelation of the fact that my life is very much wrapped up in my daughters. You may know that your loving care is making my last years very happy. I slept well on the cars, soothed by the lullaby of the engine. The scenery among the Alleghanies was very fine. Imagining the clouds to be snow-capped Alps, we could fancy ourselves in Switzerland, but here it is *flat.* Just before I left Hartford, Mr. F. took me out to the cemetery. The grass had just been cut, the Japan lilies were in full bloom and looked elegantly. It was a little cloudy, and there was a tinge of autumn

on the scene. I thought of the contrast between this and their present abode, of the joy and the glory, and, like old Pilgrim, almost wished that I were among them. It won't be long. In nineteen days I shall be sixty-nine. There may be many days yet of labor and enjoyment. 'As Thou wilt.'"

October 18. — "There is a certain bounding of the heart, when I think this may be the last letter I shall write to you in your wanderings. When I returned from the sea, the thought of that long three months before you would come almost paralyzed me; but the Western journey, and now the annual meeting of our Board with its attendant cares, have so broken the time, the remainder seems short. I met L. on the street yesterday while I was hunting maple leaves for Miss T. to take to Ceylon. He laughed, and said he thought he should find me in some such work. Our next communication will be face to face. The Lord grant it in his time! How mercifully he has kept us all in our going out and our coming in! Shall we not trust him for the future? I have read the fortieth chapter of Isaiah several times lately, and every time with new delight. This wonder-working God says to *us* in the next chapter, 'Fear thou not, for *I* am with thee.' Did he not hold you with his hand when you slipped on the mountains? He will hold you, and the waters too, in the hollow

of his hand when you are tossed on the billows. I was hardly rested from my journey, which seems more and more like a dream, when the annual meeting of our Board came on. I entertained Miss T., and enjoyed it very much. She is a valuable woman. I bought her a large doll, and Mrs. P. is dressing it, to be used in attracting young people around her. I hope some of the ladies will give her some games, ingenious puzzles and toys. The meeting was fully attended, and it is said, the best we ever had. This was a great comfort to me, as I felt rather *flat* in the morning after visiting Monday with Miss T. and others, callers, taking tea at J.'s, a 'faculty meeting' at Mrs. M.'s, some copying after coming home, and a wide-awake night! I hope we shall do more effective work in the year to come. In what I said at the close I urged the thought, prominent here and at Milwaukee, of personal responsibility. Miss M. from St. Augustine was here, and told us about the Indians who were taught there. How little Mrs. M. and I thought, when as children we played under those old elm-trees, that at this end of our lives we should be striving together to plant trees of righteousness in the garden of the Lord. Many childish experiences came fresh to mind; filling my apron with corn from father's crib, slipping through a hole in the fence and feeding it to the lambs. The

creatures looked just as sweet to me, when I saw them in the pastures in Wisconsin, as they used to then.

"It will take all winter to relate all our experiences on both sides of the water. I thought I knew before how much I loved you, but I did not."

The party returned from Europe in November. The faces of the father and mother were the first to welcome them at the parsonage door in Middletown, my mother feeling her cup of joy to be quite full then, and in the succeeding weeks. Thanksgiving Day was kept there, and then she went back to Hartford, busied in preparing a Christmas-box for her children and grandchildren in Kansas. Snow-storms and accidents delayed it, so that it did not arrive till the middle of January. She was troubled, but sure she should hear of its coming at last, saying: "The Lord has never failed me yet. I committed that box to him, and I believe he will take care of it."

The last letter she received from that home was the one announcing its arrival at last. It made her happy that the Christmas-tree was relighted, and all the joy realized which had been planned. Among the gifts for the children, were two picture-frames their grandmother had made from shells she had gathered three years before on the shore of a pond in Goshen, where their grandfather had played when he was a boy.

In December a granddaughter of Mr. Ellsworth was married at Windsor. It was in the same home which had welcomed father and mother in 1834. It has seemed beautiful since, that her unconscious farewell to that scene and circle should have been in attending this gathering with him. It was with wedding harmonies that different scenes of her life had closed. Whatever dirges there had been, nothing had ended so. It had all been in the spirit of the Greek chorus, —

> "Sing sorrow, strife and sorrow,
> But let victory remain."

To that motto of the early Christians, "To suffer and to love," she had always added, "Hope to the end."

On New Year's Day my father and mother made many calls together. The day was fine, making the drive and the interchange of "Happy New Year!" specially cheerful and joyous.

"I used often to watch Dr. and Mrs. Thompson from my window as they went by," says a lady who lived near them, "and think how beautiful it was to see persons at their age lovers still. It seemed to mean so much more than with the young."

On the 10th of January my mother set out with friends for Boston, to attend the wedding of Dr. Augustus Thompson's eldest daughter, the child of her old friend Elizabeth Strong.

On the way she spent Sunday at Worcester, her

face wearing, all the while during the visit, a peculiarly serene, happy expression, though she was not quite well, having started from Hartford with rather a severe cold. There was a detention of two hours at the station on Monday morning, owing to a delayed train. "Mother was beautiful about it," Mary wrote. "She sat like a saint, knitting, and talking with me, in a remote corner of the station, seeming to acquiesce sweetly, and concluded to stand by Providence still." She was prevented by this from being present at the opening meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society in Boston, which she had so much wished to attend. On Tuesday afternoon she was there. She took her seat in the audience, not feeling quite well; but when asked to come forward and open the meeting with prayer, gave a characteristic reply, "Yes, if I am needed." The earnestness of her prayer is remembered, as well as the heavenly spirit of her address in reporting for the Hartford society. She spoke of the work in Connecticut as not so much spreading as deepening, and of the return of Miss T. to India. Miss T., she said, went back with the romance of the missionary life quite over, and her affection for her native land stronger than ever, yet for the love of Christ she was glad to go. As she leaned forward over the desk, emphasizing the constraining power of the love of Christ, the

audience was deeply moved, feeling the almost tangible presence of the Saviour, and a certain thrill of new devotion to him. She closed by urging all to increased activity "for Jesus' sake." "For Jesus' sake," wrote Mrs. Dr. Noble, of Chicago, "it seems was her last imperishable word; a sweet and lofty motive for all we try to do in this missionary work."

Wednesday morning, the morning of the wedding-day, my mother went up to the room where her sister Mrs. Jenkins was confined with an influenza. She sat by her bedside, speaking of many things, her journey, her winter plans, &c. The death of a friend was spoken of, and Mrs. J. said: "How soon that may come to us!" "Yes," replied my mother, "we must look that in the face. At our time of life that cannot be far off," and, speaking in the most cheerful tone, added: "I rejoice to think it is so. Is it not the entrance to what we have been anticipating all our lives? Can we not trust the One who has brought us so far? He will not fail us at the last. The thought of death is any thing but a gloomy one to me;" little dreaming that death was then standing only just outside the door.

On Wednesday evening, January 15, her niece was married. My mother had yielded, without argument, to a little more elaboration of lace and trimming than usual, in her dress for the occasion,

saying: "It does not seem necessary to me, but it will make you happier, and I am content." Many afterward said she had never seemed so beautiful as on that evening. Her hair was never gray, but dark and waving as in her youth, and she had marvellously retained the delicacy of her complexion, while a life-time of true thinking and noble living had traced the loveliness of the soul on every feature.

It had been planned that she should go up to Andover the next day to see the portrait of her son Lieutenant Samuel H. Thompson, which had been painted the preceding summer for presentation at the Phillips' Centennial. A snow-storm set in, which grew heavier, and the inevitable exposure of the week had somewhat increased her cold as well as that from which her husband was suffering, so the cherished plan was given up. But the train which carried her back to Hartford that Thursday was taking her from her last disappointment.

When they arrived home it was early evening, a cold wind was blowing, and the snow was falling heavily. Both husband and wife felt each anxious for the other. On leaving the car, Dr. Thompson saw that quite a depth of snow lay between the door of the waiting-room and the carriage, and, not daring to have his wife step in it, went before and brushed it away with his feet. As he did it, he felt a strange

chill strike through him, and remembers nothing more that happened for many weeks. The next day a physician was called, and the disease developed into a serious case of typhoid pneumonia. The wife asserted that her cold was not severe, and insisted on taking the main care of her husband. Nothing would induce her to relinquish the responsibility to any one. She did not express her fears as to his recovery, except in hints, and before him kept an even, cheerful manner; but those who watched her saw the tears dropping down her cheeks while she was measuring his medicines. Twice before, her nursing had brought him back from death, and it was evident she felt that he was in peril, but that she might be able to save him again. As she was lying down one day, during that week, she took up a little collection of Scripture promises, "Words of Comfort and Consolation," and began to read. She felt her self-command give way, and laid the book down, shaking her head and saying: "This won't do. It won't answer to have any feeling now." "No, mother," said her daughter, "we must be sticks and stones to be able to go through." Well as she knew her mother, she was astonished, not only by her fortitude in persisting in nursing when not really able to sit up, but at the strength she summoned to control her emotion, lest it should make her less able to serve the dear one.

The last Scripture on her lips was the twenty-third Psalm, which she recited, without faltering, by her husband's bedside on Saturday morning.

The last thing she read was a sketch by Aldrich, in the November Atlantic, "Our New Neighbors at Ponkapog," a charming little story of the nest-building of a pair of orioles. It effectually diverted her mind for a half-hour, and one of the last sweet smiles her daughter saw on her face was when the meaning of the story flashed upon her.

The week wore on, and Saturday the sick one seemed slightly more comfortable. My mother insisted on sending her daughter away for a little rest, saying, "What would become of me if you should break down?" So rather than pain her by insistence, she went. The last person who saw her, late on Saturday evening, after friends had left, was a faithful person on whom she had long depended for certain services. The woman saw her look of extreme exhaustion, and begged to be allowed to stay and relieve her as far as possible through the night. She hesitated a moment, as if thinking it would be a comfort, but then refused her offer, as she had that of the lady with whom they boarded, saying: "No, Kate; Saturday is a hard day for you and Margaret. You are too tired and must rest. I can do it one more night as well as I have before,

and then we will see." That was the end; the overstrained cord snapped at last, and when Mrs. W. came up early on Sunday morning, she found my mother partially unconscious. Physicians and nurse were hastily summoned, pronouncing it an aggravated case of typhoid pneumonia. So much congestion of the brain accompanied it, that she felt no pain, and was conscious of nothing, except a continued care of her husband. She would say faintly: "I must go to him; he needs me; no one else can take care of him." This lasted until Monday, when the nurse's assurance that she was doing every thing for him, and that he was pleased with her care, quieted her. "That is good," she said. "Then it is all right, all right," and never spoke again, except when roused by a question.

The husband had seen enough on Sunday morning to alarm him, and continued to ask questions and send messages to her, though so low that he remembered nothing at all of it afterward. "Tell her," he said, "I would come to her if it were possible; but if I were there I could not do much for her. Say to her, '*I* will never leave thee nor forsake thee;' and another time he said: "If she has any moment of consciousness, repeat to her, 'Because I live ye shall live also,' and 'Them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.'" The shadow of a smile crossed her

mouth. "Father sends many precious messages. He says very sweet things," said one, hoping for an answer that might be taken back. "Very sweet things," she replied. "And always has?" "He always has."

A nephew repeated to her the verse in regard to the four men in the fiery furnace, "And the form of the fourth was like the Son of God." She said slowly, "As the Son of Man, the Son of Man." Mr. H. repeated to her a verse of Baxter's: —

> "My knowledge of that life is small,
> The eye of faith is dim;
> But 't is enough that Christ knows all,
> And I shall be with him."

"And that 's enough," she said.

On Wednesday morning her son came in and said, "Good morning, mother." She replied, "Good morning, my son," evidently understanding. Yet when asked how she felt, she always replied, "Very well, very comfortable." Every effort was made to stimulate her, that she might stay till her daughter, who was on her way from Kansas, might reach Hartford. As that hope died out, one said, "You will see Will and Sam, mother, before you see L." "Not quite yet," she answered. "What shall we tell her when she comes?" She replied with a message of love, and at four o'clock that afternoon, January 29, she was not, for God took her.

In those four days she had not felt pain. At the last it seemed like translation rather than death, and no one who loved her has since been able to think of her otherwise than as going on with some ministry of love, in a life of which she used to say her anticipation was that it would be "activity without weariness."

"Say ye to the righteous, It shall be well with him," was the message sent that week by her friend, Mrs. R.; and the thought of every heart was, "She is with Christ, which is far better."

A merciful deafness had suddenly seized her husband, so that he was shielded from the hint of those last scenes, suspecting enough to occasion his rapidly growing worse, but not knowing what had passed till many weeks later.

The precious form was laid in his room at the Seminary, that all might be, as soon as possible, quiet in the house, where he lay hovering between life and death. The next morning thirty years had slipped away from her, and her face was that of the matron of forty, lovely, and lighted up as with some peaceful and grand thought.

She lay where her husband's portrait could look down upon her, and the faces of the sons who had been waiting for her. Her white hands, with the shining wedding-ring, seemed to speak, — those blessed hands that had "done good, and not evil, all the days of her life."

Never were the callas and the heads of wheat more fitly offered than to her, nor the white lilies-of-the-valley, which she held in her hand.

It was a sweet thought in one friend, to have bits of sea-moss woven with the wreath of roses which she sent.

The last services were held on Friday afternoon. It was at the moment when Dr. Daggett was offering prayer, and all hearts were uniting in his petition for the recovery of him who was so anxiously watched in his sick-room that afternoon, that a slightly favorable change was noticed in him. He fell into a quiet sleep, and the fatal sinking was checked.

A choir of students sang the chant, —

> "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,
> The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
> When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
> Help of the helpless! oh, abide with me."

falling with singular sweetness on the ears of those who were beginning to feel what it would be to miss such love as hers out of a selfish and fickle world. "We ought to dry our tears," said Professor Riddle, "and then we shall see how rounded and symmetrical was her character, and how grand a thing it is in this sorrowing world to believe in Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life; to take all as He says it, and because He says it, and thus to live in hope."

Many tributes were called out by her death. A friend of the Seminary wrote: —

"In the removal of Mrs. Thompson's personal presence, our first thought is of the loss we sustain. But our second thought is better. There is no loss. Her life is built into this Seminary. It is a foundation stone that has risen up as the walls of superstructure have grown higher and higher. All the way up from the beginning we have been building on it and building with it; and never while the Institute lasts can that life crumble out of the space in which we have laid it.

"Could our wishes have prevailed, we would have delayed her going till she had seen with mortal eye the completion of the new Hall, and mingled her voice with ours in the shoutings of 'Grace, grace unto it!' But our comfort is the thought that, as it is, she shall behold it from a far better vantage-ground than ours.

"If there were any place for tears in connection with such a departure, we would let them fall over the loneliness now flung upon the life so long intertwined with hers. But our venerated father and friend has a more precious sympathy than any we can give him. He knows that a little farther along the now parted streams will unite again to flow eternally on together. Meantime we pledge him the cheap consolation of *our* sympathy, and invoke for him the priceless sympathy of Him who wept at the grave of Bethany.

"The household that once was so gladsome and bright is sadly darkened now. One light after another has gone out of it, and the shadows of death and change have gathered densely around it. But the dawn of a new and brighter day is breaking. The reunion of these scattered members has already begun, and will go steadily on under

the Master's wise ordering, till at length, no loved one missing, they shall be encircled in the arms of an everlasting life.

"There are precious memories clustering around this school of the prophets. More than one of the saints whose names the Church cannot and will not willingly let die, have hallowed it by their labors and their love, and now on the roll of these, with sadness, and yet with gladness, we write lovingly and tenderly the name of Eliza Butler Thompson."

"She was a woman," said another, "of noteworthy qualities that commanded respect and kindled affection. To a native, sunny kindliness, to a cheerful, courageous hopefulness, to a stanch conscientiousness, she added no small executive energy and force of thinking. A delightful sense of wholesomeness characterized her, an ingenuous straightforwardness, and a tenacity of conviction that held its ground until there was occasion for abandoning it. Her fervor of thought was largely influenced by the great Edwards, who was once a pastor in her native town. The framework of her theology was garlanded by loving deeds, and perfumed by the exquisite blossoms of self-sacrifice. Such truthful constancy, such guileless sincerity, such single-hearted devotion to truth and humanity, such loving, thoughtful interest and sacrifice for kindred and friends, reassure us that there is still something of the divine in human life, that grand realities are still to be found amidst

all its hollow insincerities. Those who knew Mrs. Thompson will cherish her memory as among the precious treasures of the heart."

In Michael Angelo's painting of "The Three Fates," the face of the one who presides over the beginning of human life is scowling, terrified, and hesitant. The second, who weaves the web, has a look of grand patience, as of one moving steadily under a heavy load, an expression of force concentrated on endurance and watchfulness; a kind of solemn awe, as if there was something to hope and much to fear. Atropos, holding out the shears and seeming to restrain herself only by the greatest tension, from cutting the thread before the prescribed instant, turns her face in the direction opposite to that in which the others look, and sees what inspires her with triumphant eagerness. "At last," her face says, "it is time for joy, a bounding into exultant freedom, unhindered progress, and everlasting life."

"Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper."

In the paper which my mother left, designating mementos for different members of the family, she added, as if to give one more smile to those who would read it after she had gone, "In the words of old 'Valiant for Truth,' I leave my sword to those who come after, and my courage and skill to him that can get it."

She closed by saying: "God has given to us all the prospect of a blessed reunion in the heavenly inheritance, where two of the number are waiting in sure and certain hope. May the dear grandchildren, the crowning mercy of our lives, be all included in the sure bundle of eternal life. The Lord grant it in his time. To Him all the future is committed."

Under her name, on the family monument at Cedar Hill, are the words,

"PRESENT WITH THE LORD."

"For all thy saints who from their labors rest,
Who thee, by faith, before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed.

"Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might,
Thou, Lord, their Leader in the well-fought fight,
Thou, in the darkness drear, the Light of light.

"The golden evening brightens in the west,
Soon, soon to faithful warriors comes the rest,
Sweet is the calm of Paradise the blest."

"Give us grace so to follow their good example, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom."

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